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*Defending AMA SX champ
Ryan Villopoto at Anaheim 2*

© Ray Archer

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*Clement Desalle makes shapes
as the sun goes down in Mantova*

© Sarah Gutierrez

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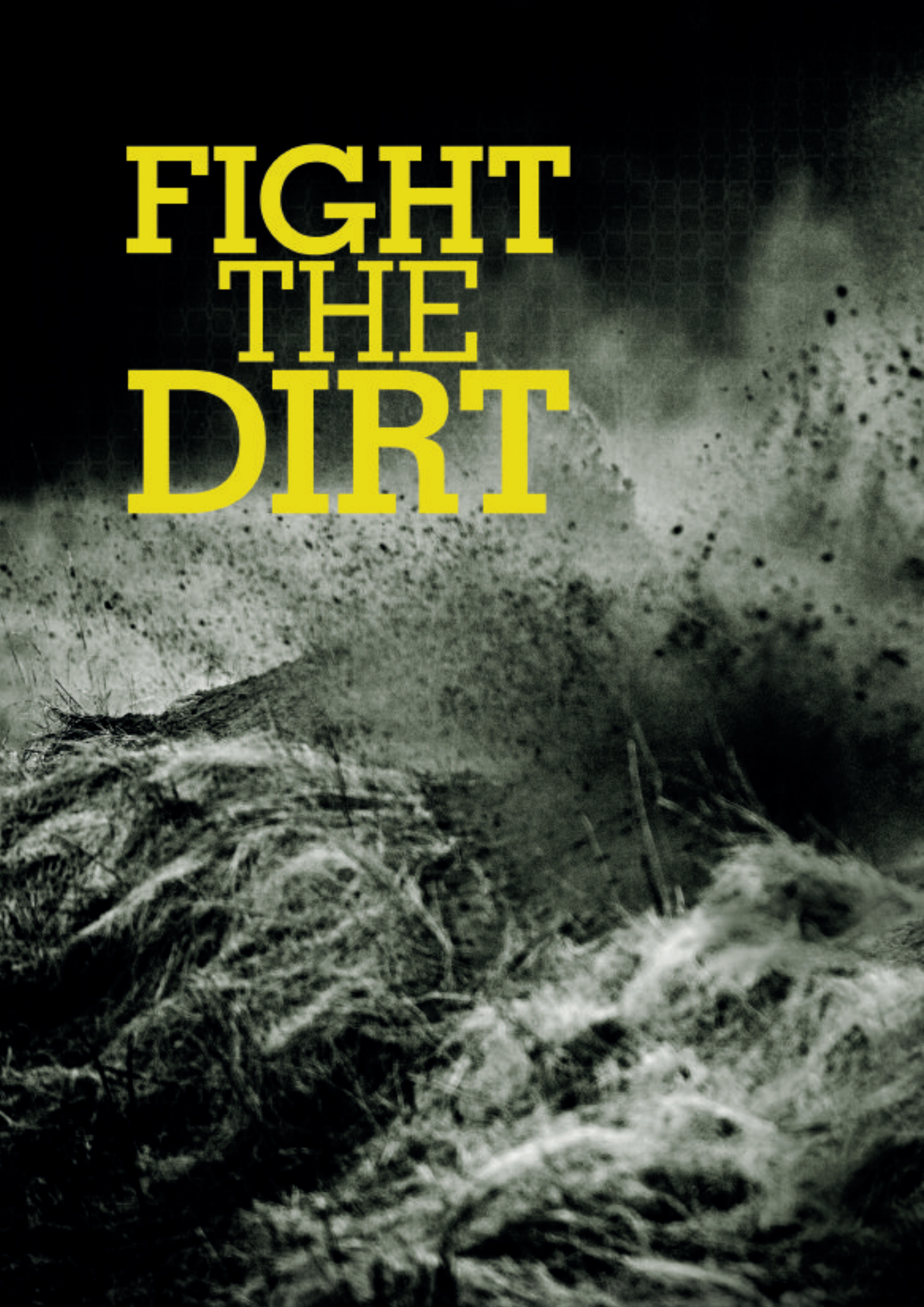


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COMMENT

Hawkstone International or Liverpool Arenacross – which event will/did you choose? It's only the start of February and already we're witnessing our first big event clash of the year as the perennial pre-season classic goes up against the final round of the UK's new and exciting indoor series. I understand how the clash happened and I get why the Hawkstone promoters feel that they had no choice but to run on a date that was already taken but even so it's still a very bad situation. And not just for the fans either but also the racers who are torn between supporting a series they committed to months ago or taking part in what's now considered to be an essential shakedown for the year ahead.

For the fans it's a toughie because do you spend £25 and go watch one of the best Hawkstone International line-ups ever assembled while potentially soaking or freezing your nips off or do you save a fiver on admission and sit in a warm comfy seat as a selection of the UK and France's top indoor racers battle it out for big bucks in Liverpool's Echo Arena? I think whichever choice you make will be the right one...

I meanwhile am a Libra and that means decision making is never a strong point. Luckily, I've come up with a solution that balances out my day and means I get to experience both events while possibly pick up a speeding ticket n'all. Bonus.

With the events taking part around 60 just miles apart – which kinda makes the fact that they clash even worse – I'm planning on shooting the opening four motos at Hawkstone before heading north to see just who will claim the Arenacross title. It's a crazy plan for sure but what a way to get my moto fix – a party in the park followed by possible controversy by the Mersey! Sweet!

While it's not imperative I attend both races the fact of the matter is I will because I want to. Hawkstone's Hawkstone while the Arenacross series has been a real shot in the arm for British motocross and definitely deserves supporting. That said the real reason I'm gonna go is because I wanna know who's gonna take the title – it's gonna be close!

On the flipside Hawkstone holds many great memories for me and although I wasn't there when

Jobe jumped over Malherbe in '84 (or see it on TV as the ITV crew totally missed getting any footage of Georges' huge leaps) I was hanging over the fence in 1986 to see Eric Geboers and Jobe take it to the wire in moto two after Dave Thorpe had spanked himself through the whoops in race one. I was also at every subsequent race of note held at the Shropshire venue thereafter – thanks dad!

I've also raced at Hawkstone a fair few times myself and have a bit of a love/hate relationship with the place. The first time I raced there was back in 1994 and that's when the track went straight on after going under the footbridge and over two jumps before a small chicane spat you out at the base of the hill – the track flowed so much better back then...

Anyway on the first lap of practice – my first lap of Hawkstone Park ever – I come under the bridge pinned and line up the old Girling leap which I've already decided I'm gonna launch off like a legend. The only problem being it's October and the track surface is six inches of freshly graded slop.

Even though it's all just been worked on, somewhere on the face of the jump is a hidden kicker which means as I leave the lip my bike stands up more or less vertical. At this point no amount of back brake is gonna help my sorry ass out and as I land with my front fender still pointing towards the heavens the front wheel smacks down so hard my hands bounce straight off the bars and I eat sh*t into a huge pile of sh*t. Sh*t!

From that point my relationship with the place only got better and 12 years after my initial run around the Salop club's circuit I was lucky enough to race the final round of the 2006 Maxxis British championships there which remains to be one of my career highlights – if there are such things.

These days I'm happy to stay on the spectator side of the fence, concentrating on pointing my Canon at sections of the track where I once lay down tyre tracks. Hawkstone's a truly a magical place and the International is truly an awesome event – long may it reign supreme as one of the best non championship races around. But in future years let's not change the date so it clashes with something else...

Sully



Throttle off and cruising is how I'll always be remembered...

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KTM boss Stefan Pierer
now owns Husqvarna n'all



Despite getting older Neo's
still kicking ass in the Matrix



NEWSHUND!

**A DIRTY DELIVERY OF OFF-ROAD NEWS – AND OTHER NONSENSE –
DREAMED UP AT THE DESK OF OUR DEPUTY DAWGINATOR...**

It's pretty obvious that the bosses of German bike manufacturer BMW have had a bit of a bee in their bonnet over the rise and rise of the KTM empire – like they've got a thing about Austrians taking over the world or summat. At first they decided to fight back by developing and building an off-road race bike of their own but in all fairness this project turned out to be a frickin' disaster – if you don't believe me ask Knighter.

Plan B was to purchase a company that already had an established off-road range. They accomplished that by buying Husqvarna and then ploughing a fair amount of finance into the Swedish/Italian brand to get the product range running better and the production line working properly n'all. However, despite pouring millions into it the company has not been performing as well as the BMW group had hoped.

Earlier this week a rumour came out that the Husqvarna brand was not only up for sale but that it was KTM that was

buying it – possibly similarly to the way they snapped up Husaberg. This isn't the case though and it's actually KTM's CEO Stefan Pierer who has bought Husqvarna from the BMW Group through his own company – Pierer Industrie AG – for an undisclosed sum.

With off-road bike sales running low and Husqvarna's flagship model – the Nuda 900 – not selling well either the chances are Pierer got a bargain. And if he can turn Husqvarna's fortunes around in a similar way in which he helped reshape KTM then the future's pretty exciting for Husky fans. It'll be interesting what transpires in the coming months...

Over in America there's good news and bad. The bad news surrounds former quad racer Caleb Moore who became the first athlete to lose his life in X-Games competition. The 25 year old freestyle snowmobiler crashed hard at Winter X in Aspen when he failed to fully rotate a backflip. Although Caleb walked away from the crash

complicated heart and brain injuries meant he later died in hospital.

Aside from a few minor spills everyone's been staying much safer in the AMA Supercross series that's four rounds old as we go to press. Surprisingly Davi Millsaps is the current red plate holder with a seven point lead over comeback kid Trey Canard. Defending champ Ryan Villopoto is currently third in points with other pre-season favourites Ryan Dungey fourth, Chad Reed fifth and James Stewart 11th. Bubba's allegedly nursing a torn ACL and only looks like a shadow of his former self. In the 250 division Eli Tomac's been the alpha male but a nasty crash at round four allowed Ken Roczen to take the race win and the championship lead as the Honda star was unable to continue.

Although Dungey has been kinda struggling so far this season the KTM bigwigs must still think that team boss Roger De Coster is doing a great job as they've extended his contract to 2016.

"The job continues to be fun for me and to work with KTM is very refreshing," says the five-time 500cc world champ. "It's easy to get things done, decisions are made quickly and I can have a lot of influence on the team and the bike. It is our goal to fight for the title in both supercross and motocross – ideally in the future also with two factory riders per class." At a time when other teams are cutting back – or folding completely as L&M Honda have and J-Star KTM will at the end of the SX season – it's refreshing for a company to show long term commitment to its racing programme.

Over on this side of the Atlantic it's been a great month for off-road sport despite some absolutely shocking weather. The Arenacross UK series has filled seats in London and Belfast and is currently being dominated by Buildbase Honda's Adam Chatfield. The Brazilian based rider has won both events so far and takes a small lead over Putoline Honda's Nev Bradshaw into the second



Roy Emberson's in the business of running a new business

half of the series.

Husaberg's Graham Jarvis dominated the Tough One at Nantmawr Quarry beating KTM's Jonny Walker and Gas Gas factory star Danny McCanney to the finish. Grimbo couldn't repeat the feat a few weeks later at the opening round of the British Extreme Enduro Championship which was held at Tong Hall near Bradford. David Knight took the win there by a massive seven minutes after lapping the entire field before waiting three minutes by the finish so he didn't have to take on another lap in the two hour race. Walker again finished second with McCanney third while Jarvis trailed home in fifth.

Old-school readers might remember the Fox and Hounds circuit near Newbury that hosted the 1984 British 250cc Grand Prix. The venue was lost to the sport a couple of years later and has lay dormant ever since. The good news is that the sound of motocross machines will roar around the circuit once more as on **April 28** the Dave Thorpe Evo series (www.dtevoseries.co.uk) pays a visit. For more info email dani@adwevents.co.uk or check out their Facebook page where you'll also find a stack of old images and whatnot.

That event'll no doubt bring back some great memories for Roy Emberson who was there watching as Jeremy Whatley took the overall win. Embo of course will be running Jem's son Kristian in the Maxxis and Red Bull Pro Nationals this season on Yamaha machinery as is the norm for Roy's boys.

Something that's new in the Embo camp is the launch of a new parts and kit distribution/retail business that'll be run under the MBO Sport banner. One of the products the company will be pushing is the excellent range of Deft Family gloves – a firm favourite amongst the boys here at DBR Towers. Check out all the products online at www.mbosport.com.

One last thing... if you're wanting to take advantage of our excellent subscriptions offers then be warned that the telephone number has changed. The new number to call is **0844 292 0216**. You can still do it online of course – just clicky click over to www.dirtbikerider.com. **Booyah!** 🐾

MAC211

MR SMOOTH!

BILLY'S TAKING A MORE MATURE

Words by Billy MacKenzie Photo by 404shots.com

Training and riding seems to be more of a gradual burn this year rather than a scheduled sprint – if that makes sense? What I'm trying to say by this is that after coming off a year of bad results and injuries everything kinda hits a low point and it takes that little bit longer to get back up to speed with riding, training and mentally. It's something that is very rewarding though when you start to notice the progression and even if it does come slowly you always have this fresh motivation to reach for the point where you know you once were.

Since riding my Yamaha I have deliberately held myself back when I'm riding – just being that little more mature I guess. Some days I feel like I could just unleash and let the adrenaline spill over but what good would that do at this time of the year I ask myself? None is the answer! I'm really enjoying structuring my week and hitting targets at the moment and knowing I have until mid April before I need to be at my best. It gives me a good cushion and time to enjoy training and riding my new bike.

My new bike is lovely! I just spent a week testing with my new mechanic and got the thing even more dialled in. We tweaked some suspension settings, added some new engine parts and I'm now starting to finish the motos comfortably and at a good pace.

I'm throwing out some old school techniques from when I used to study Everts back in 2007 and I'm finding they are starting to manifest into some pretty useful skills. So instead of going out and slamming motos at the moment I'm enjoying trying to do laps at a good pace and never touching my feet on the ground – it's not easy but I'm noticing big improvements and trust in the bike.

This month is gonna be pretty full on and I will hopefully have a lot to talk about next time as I head over to do the New Zealand championship riding for Coppins' new team. I'm really excited to be spending time with Josh and learning as much from him as I can. New Zealand is meant to be beautiful and it's another part of the world I'll be able to see as I keep globe trotting!

Hope you are all enjoying whatever two wheeled adventures you can over there. I've been keeping tabs on the Arenacross UK series and think it's great to have a proper indoor championship going again – especially for the youngsters. So congratulations to Matt Bates and his team for keeping things going and doing such a good job. I was almost home for London but maybe next year...

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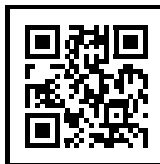
JOIN US!

SPOTS UP FOR GRABS ON THE DBR TEST SQUAD...

If you love riding dirt bikes and writing about it just as much as we do then we might just have an offer for you that you can't refuse. Due to injuries, plain laziness, killer deadlines and whatnot sometimes it's just not possible for us to get out there and test as much stuff as we'd like to so we want to get a couple of extra testers onboard to help share the load. Yep, I said share the load – big whoop, wanna fight about it?

Anyhoo, the dealio is this. We need reliable riders who can objectively analyse dirt bike bits, riding kit, workshop products etc and then translate their thoughts into written words which we can run in the magazine and online. You don't need to be super speedy, just experienced enough to know when something works – or not – and have the balls to tell us all exactly how it is.

Applying for this role is simple – simply head online to www.dirtbikerider.com/go/join-squad and download the form. Then either fill it in and email it to Suttly with DBR Test Squad as the subject or send it through the post t'old fashioned way with a stamp attached to our usual postal address. Then just sit back and wait to hear back from us. Your fully completed application needs to be with us by March 22. Successful applicants will be informed by April 1 – I fool ye not – and you'll start getting stuff to test soon after that...



WIN! WIN! WIN! WIN! WIN!

A YEAR'S SUPPLY OF RIP N ROLL GOGGLES...

Goggles are an ultra important part of any racer's kit and since it's imperative that you're ready to rip in all conditions British goggle manufacturer Rip N Roll have got your back. That's right, these boys and girls have got peeper protectors to suit whatever weather conditions Mother Nature can throw your way – with tear off, roll off and XL roll-off combos ready to rock on their stunning Hybrid range of goggles.

To celebrate their all-round awesomeness – and our great looks – we've hooked up with Rip N Roll to offer one lucky a reader a year's supply of Hybrid goggles. That's a

prize package worth almost £300! That basically boils down to six pairs of race-ready goggles – two standard packs that come with a detachable trim, detachable nose guard, goggle bag and 10 tear offs, two Fully Loaded racer packs that come with all that plus roll offs and two further sets that come with XL roll offs. Basically, there's enough there to last a full year.

To be in with a chance of winning this whopping prize we want you to answer an oh-so easy question that's been deliberated over by a hand picked panel of question pickers. And the question is this – who's the current Red Bull Pro Nationals MX2 champion

that religiously runs Rip N Roll goggles?

Is it: **A:** Neville Bradshaw
B: Breville Nadshaw
C: Really Notsure
D: Brad Nevshaw

If you know the answer log on to our website – www.dirtbikerider.com – and follow the competitions link in **dirtZone** – or you can scan this **QR code** with your smartphone and it'll take you right there. The first correct answer randomly drawn from the stack of correct answers will have the prize delivered directly to their door!





YAKETY YAK

HOMeward BOUND!

AFTER AN AWESOME MONTH IN NEW ZEALAND JAKE'S HEADED HOME...

Words by Jake Nicholls Photo by Chris Ritchie

Hi everyone – hope you're all good! I'm glad to see that the worst of the extreme weather has gone from the UK now – that didn't look fun for anyone that wanted to achieve anything productive.

Having looked on the web a bit while being here there still seems to be a fair bit of riding getting done by people so fair play for cracking on with it. The people over here can't understand how we function in that kind of weather let alone ride in it but I think British riders are pretty good at adapting and getting on with it as we simply have no choice. I also think that's our strong point as racers. I'm sure you are all sick of hearing about the weather so I will leave it at that!

My month started with going down to a lake resort owned by BT's in laws which is situated next to the largest and gnarliest commercially used rivers for rafting and kayaking. When I backpacked over here four years ago with three mates we did the rafting here and we all remember it as being one of the coolest things we did.

Being so close I thought it would be worth another go and since they know the owners of the company they set me up to go down in raft with no instructor and only my kiwi mate James who has no experience at all. We were pretty unsure of it but thought bugger it as the main guy from the place was like 'dude you're a moto boy – you've done way gnarlier stuff than this bro' so it was game on after that. We had no clue what we were doing but blagged our way down. After it the organizers were laughing saying 'we didn't think you'd make it down in the boat boys so well done'.

I've had a very productive month of training and riding – it's been wicked and I feel like I am learning more and more about my riding and my body the whole time. When my bike arrived it came in a cardboard wrapped wooden crate that looked only big enough to support a BMX and with BT away at a wedding (not that he'd be any help) it was up to me to build her up. I wasn't worried about it as I have built a bike up before but I was concerned slightly as there was no destructions of how to build it and there were certain electrical bits I was fairly unsure of.

I got it built in about two hours in the end and with all my suspension, silencer and bars fitted. I must have lost about a stone in sweat while doing it as the workshop was about 500 degrees and I was pretty much naked with only my gearbox covered up in case the neighbouring farmer drove up the drive.

I was very excited to start riding which was nice as I explained a couple of month's ago that I had lost the craving to ride over the cold months – apart from testing. I'm glad I had that time off the bike as I feel I may have not got that burning desire to cut laps like I did after I built my bike up.

The first couple of days on the bike were steady as always but I was shocked as to how good the bike was for a stocker as I had only ridden my race bike all last year. The first week or so was tough on the body as I had mainly been doing low intensity base training for the winter so my body was a little in shock. But after a couple of weeks of quality riding time on good tracks

I was feeling fairly good – not great but decent.

BT and I signed up for the annual Raglan Rock four-hour cross country that we did last year when I did it solo on a borrowed EXC 450 and made myself ill. This year I did it with a friend over here who only rides about 10 hours a year so it was a team of great contrast.

The dead engine start didn't go so well as the electric start didn't fire it up straight away so I was about 40th around the first corner which was midpack as there were about 90 people in the race. I rode like a madman around the first 33km lap and pitted in about ninth. Tilly my team mate then took over for a lap, I then did two laps in one hit which was around an hour and 10 minutes of riding so I was worried I might run out of gas with the stock tank but I just made it. Tilly then did one more then I did another two laps to finish off. It was tough on the rugged and hilly terrain with a lot of river crossings and steep climbs and rough bits from previous races but I really enjoyed it and we ended up third overall in our class which wasn't bad considering Tilly never rides.

We then had our toughest week of the month and buried ourselves in training and riding. We train from 6am everyday so bedtime is pretty early here. On the days that we ride we start at 8am as the sun is not so strong yet and the track still has moisture in it from the night before. So at least I sleep well at the moment!

The weekend just gone was my first race of the 2013 season at the annual Woodville GP in Palmerston North which is about four hours from Ben's house. I had a good day and won all my races against some decent opposition. I even holeshot two of my races on the stock bike which was cool as the Kiwis love having tuned up bikes.

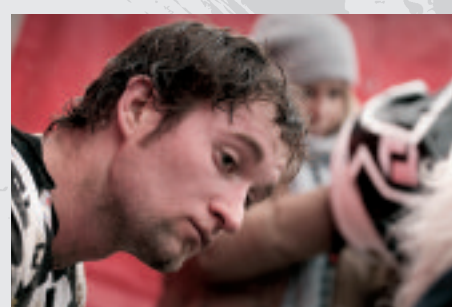
Anyone that's ridden in NZ knows how fast these guys go on their own tracks so I was pumped to win it all and in the mixed invitational race I was battling for third behind BT and Todd Waters but since the average speed of the track was 59kph and it started to get dusty I backed it off a bit. It was 30 degrees plus all day so I jumped in the river after the race then headed home. Poor Blu got heat stroke so was chucking up with huge migraines most of the way back bless her – I felt pretty bad for her as the NZ roads are windier than Milton Malsor.

I was fairly stiff the next day as always after the first race of the year. I'm finishing off my training this week then flying home. I'm looking forward to starting the season as I'm feeling pretty good!

The stock KTM has been awesome – it's done a whole month of riding on the same chain and sprockets. I change the oil every the rides and change the oil filter every second oil change. I put a new clutch in it before the race at the weekend but it didn't particularly need it. Oh, and two new sets of Golden Tyres and she's spot on!

Cheers for reading guys and see you soon.

Go hard #45



MAX PAIN!

PRE-SEASON BLOW FOR NAGL AS BONES ARE BROKEN IN STARCROSS SLAM...

Honda World Motocross rider Max Nagl becomes Clement Desalle's first victim of the year as the quiet German is landed on by the sometimes erratic Belgian in Mantova's third and final moto. Video footage shot at the circuit clearly shows the MX Panda launch his Suzuki into the back of the Bavarian's bike – albeit accidentally – causing both riders to go down hard.

While Desalle walked away unscathed the 25-year-old suffered with two broken bones and a pulled ligament in his left hand. Although the injury will require Nagl wears a plaster cast it's thought he'll be fully fit for the first GP of the year in Qatar.

"Obviously I'm really disappointed that this has happened but unfortunately it is part of racing," says the diplomatic Honda debutante. "From my side it was totally a racing incident with nobody to blame. My hand is sore and we were having a really good debut weekend with the Honda so I can't hide how disappointed I am but we will work hard to get everything fixed for the first Grand Prix. The team has been great and we've got some really good people around us so I am in a good position to have the right treatment to get things healed quickly."



ALL CHANGE!

THE FORMAT OF THE OVERSEAS GPS GETS CHANGED AGAIN...

After the initial uproar surrounding Youthstream's decision to only ship certain teams out to the opening overseas GP in Qatar and Thailand the overlords of the MXGP universe have had a change of heart and decided that any of the Officially Approved Teams – aka OATs – with riders who have shown an interest in traveling to rounds one and two are now very welcome.

To accommodate the extra riders the decision to run a pair of mixed-capacity motos – that would be scored separately – is now scrapped n'all. The new plan for the opening round is to run a single moto for each class followed by a Super Final for the top 20 MX1 and MX2 runners on the day – we'll find those by taking the top 18 from each opening moto and then two more for each class from an LCQ. That basically means everyone will get at least two races and four lucky Super Finalists will get three!

At round two in Thailand – and all remaining overseas GPS – the top 10 in each championship will get a guaranteed slot in the Super Final and they'll be joined by the best eight from moto one and another two from the LCQ from each class making a 40 man main event.

Check out next month's DBR for the full lowdown on the world championship...



STAR TROOPER!

ROCKSTAR SUZUKI'S KEVIN STRIJBOS IS MANTOVA'S MAXIMUM MAN...

Current British MX1 champion Kevin Strijbos starts his season with a bang by taking three wins from three at the Mantova Supercross. In his return ride for the factory Suzuki squad – where he historically had his best ever results – the Belgian beats a quality field that includes team-mate Clement Desalle, factory Honda teamsters Evgeny Bobryshev and Max Nagl, IceOne KTM's Xavier Boog and Rui Goncalves as well as Kawasaki Racing Team's Gautier Paulin and Jeremy van Horebeek and the man he replaced at Suzuki – Tanel Leok.

"I'm quite surprised by how well the weekend went," says Strijbos. "Saturday I was struggling to find a rhythm and set good lap times but on Sunday I started off well by winning the one-on-one race and then I had a couple of good starts and found a really good rhythm that worked all day. I'm happy I could win the race but also learned in which areas I need to work on before the first GP."

Bobryshev edges Leok out for second overall on a tie-breaker while Van Horebeek and Paulin round out the top five at the perennial pre-season opener.



TOTAL CARNAGE!

SEASON STARTS WITH A SLAM FOR SPEEDY GONCALVES...



Strijbos yanks the holey as Rui and team-mate Xavier Boog bang bars



Goncalves chows down on the Mantova mud

With nowhere to go Evgeny Bobryshev launches off the stricken IceOne KTM

Yeehaw! Bobby goes for a wild ride as Rui bounces off



© Nick Haslell

TRIBUTE!

HAWK INTERNATIONAL SET TO SALUTE GEORGES JOBE...

One of the best line ups ever assembled heads to Hawkstone Park on **February 10** for the Hawk International. The perennial pre-season blast should be an absolute epic if the entry list is anything to go by.

Leading the billing in the MX1 class is Clement Desalle who'll no doubt be banging bars with team-mate Kevin Strijbos, Tommy Searle, Gautier Paulin, Xavier Boog, Tanel Leok, Rui Goncalves, Jon Barragan, Matiss Karro, Marc de Reuver and anyone else who's daft enough to get in his way. The 450 division will also see British battlers Brad Anderson, Jason Dougan and Alex Snow line up against the international stars.

In MX2 world champion Jeffrey Herlings starts as favourite although

he'll most likely have his hands full beating off Arnaud Tonus, Jordi Tixier and local hope Elliott Banks-Browne who'll be looking to start his year with a bang!

All the race action kicks off at 11:45 which is a wee bit earlier than advertised as the organisers are worried about it getting dark before the end of the mixed-capacity super final that will see the top 20 MX2 and MX1 riders battle it out for the Georges Jobe trophy.

If you don't already know then Hawkstone Park can be found around 10 miles north of Shrewsbury between the A53 and A49. SY4 4NA is the post code for all you sat nav superstars out there. For more info log on to www.hawkstonemx.co.uk.

FALSE START!

A CHANGE OF CIRCUMSTANCES FOR ROB HOOPER SEES HIM CALL IT QUITS...

Moments after last month's DBR got sent to the printers we heard the shocking news that Rob Hooper had decided to cease all racing efforts after losing out on a substantial amount of promised sponsorship monies. Although we picked up the phone and yelled those immortal words – stop the press – we were just a gnat's chuff too late and the story featuring Hoops and his squad ran as scheduled.

While that was disappointing in itself that's nowt to what Rob must be going through right now as he had to make the call to team riders Gert Krestinov, Stuart Edmonds, Lewis Gregory and Jamie Skuse and say 'sorry boys but it's just ain't happening' – although being somewhat less northern and therefore more diplomatic than us he

probably sugar coated it a wee bit first.

The good news is Gert has landed lucky with a ride in a freshly formed new team – Ansatech Apico Kawasaki – although Lulu, Stuey and Jamie haven't been so fortunate just yet. However, they're all staying positive as the race season approaches.

"It would not be fair for our team and sponsors to try and carry on through the season without the financial stability we really believed would be available to us in 2013," explains Rob. "I have taken this decision now as it's only fair to the excellent riders I had lined up to try to get a ride with other teams. I'd like to personally thank every one of my riders, mechanics and sponsors for their support over the years and wish them luck with their future racing."



© Ray Archer



JOCK ROCK!

SCOTTISH SERIES SET TO START AT LEUCHARS...

The winningest rider in Scottish motocross history – that's Pendrich Kawasaki's Ross Rutherford – will be looking to start the defence of his championship on a high as the Safe Access championship fires into at Leuchars on **March 3**. With little else on in the UK that weekend it's expected that a fair few British championship contenders will head north to join in the fun n'all at the rough as badgers sand circuit that'll be excellent training for the Maxxis series opener at FatCat Motoparc on **March 17**.



MIXED MAXXIS!

SCHEDULE SET FOR BRIT CHAMPS...

ACU Events have finally released revised dates and venues for the 2013 Maxxis British Motocross Championship. Although they released a list ages ago it had to be changed when Youthstream rescheduled some of their dates and whatnot. As well as letting us know what's happening when and where an announcement has been made as to which rounds will feature the mixed capacity final motos – that'll be round one at FatCat on **March 17** and round five at Foxhill on **June 2**. Simple.

HOT DATES!

MAXXIS BRITISH MOTOCROSS CHAMPIONSHIP

March 17 FatCat Motoparc, Yorkshire

March 24 Canada Heights, Kent

April 7 Lyng, Norfolk

May 12 Milton Park, Northamptonshire

June 2 Foxhill, Wiltshire

June 23 Desertmartin, Northern Ireland

August 11 Hawkstone Park, Shropshire

October 6 Farleigh Castle, Wiltshire



IRN-BRY

PLEASURE N' PAIN!

A BROKEN CHAIN AND SOME BROKEN TOOLS ARE A SMALL PRICE TO PAY FOR GETTING TO HANG OUT WITH THE LEGEND THAT IS PISTOL PETE...

Words by Bryan MacKenzie Photo by Pistol Pete

Do you remember how I ended last month with the MacBook incident? What I was really trying to get across was the truth that rings through that age old saying – there's no pleasure without pain. And that theme continued right after I'd submitted last month's blurb...

Following an awesome opening part of the trip (excluding the assault on my Apple) we fired into the Cali lifestyle like riding the Hulk rollercoaster – zero to 60 in a second! With premium tracks, intense riding and an unreal experience we came back down to earth pretty abruptly similar to the very same ride!

To quash a couple of 'loose' rumours I did have an accident while I was out there which unfortunately ended our trip short of the planned three weeks but it wasn't as serious as seemingly a lot of people have heard. I had a fairly big fail on a double while riding at The Ranch and went and bloody grenaded my big toe. The x-ray resembled a map of America's state lines!

It sounds like a minor problem and in the grand scale of things it was a pretty decent outcome but even after all of my optimism early doors in hoping that it was just a gnarly stubbing I just couldn't throw the leg back over the bike to ride it out so we decided it best to come home.

Some weeks later now though and everything is sweet – resuming all of my regular jobs and catching back up with my riding schedule. In fact over the last week me and Pistol Pete have been touring Britain trying to find anywhere to ride. I went to Fatcat one Thursday for the day to attend the Kawasaki team media launch but I was too busy doing pictures and interviews to be able to shred too many laps even though the track was in fine fettle. So much so that Pistol and I loaded up and headed back down there Saturday morning to ride for the weekend.

Unfortunately between late Thursday evening and early Saturday morning it must have snowed like the world was ending because by the time we got there it had melted and turned the track to heavy going with a dousing of rain due after dark. So we decided to stay only for the day and high tailed it back to the motherland – drove straight past the front door and carried on the same distance north!

It was some commute over the space of four days just to find somewhere to ride and I clocked up about 1000 miles worth of driving just chasing the weather – or running away from it actually. And I've still to go home yet!

A wee bit off topic but a You've Been Framed double-whammy is on just now and that sh't is just hilarious. I struggle to take my eyes off it because I can laugh so hard at times that I get a full body sweat on!

Intense – like a full body workout.

It should be known that Pete and I shouldn't ever be let loose to go practicing by ourselves. My mechanic BC was moving house over the weekend so I was left to fend for myself. I try my best when it comes to mechanics and in my heyday I could strip a motor to its bare bones and rebuild it with zero stress. It was only a year or two ago actually that BC challenged me to change a piston on my practice bike and said I couldn't do it in under an hour – I smashed it out with enough time left I could have done it twice. But since having a mechanic I'll admit I've more than taken my hand out of the game and I've virtually retired from doing any bike work at all.

Because I don't have to do so much these days my toolbox is pretty embarrassing! On our tour so far I've came up against quite a few challenges to overcome that the old toolbox just wasn't equipped for – like airing out the forks or tightening the chain for example. And being up in the arse end of nowhere in the highlands there aren't any Halfords where we can easily acquire that kinda thing.

I didn't have a flat head screwdriver to bleed the air out of the forks so popped into Tesco with my fingers crossed and picked myself up a new screwdriver set for £6! It's not Snap-On but it works! Later in the day while at the track I realised we didn't have a 32mm to undo the rear wheel nut or a 12mm to tighten the chain either so we popped back out and found a small hardware store and purchased their biggest adjustable and a spanner set including a 12mm for £2.99 – bargain.

Back at the track again I was devastated to find that the adjustable which stated it went to 33mm was a bawhair too small and must have really gone to just 31.5mm. What a rip! But we were determined to make it work so I grabbed one of the 2.5kg weights that was lying in the top of my tool box to use as a hammer (because that's M.I.A. too) and my new flat headed screwdriver to try persuade the adjustable out that extra half a millimetre.

An hour later and having snapped the end off my new Tesco value 'driver and thrown the adjustable we headed back into the village and eventually borrowed a 32mm socket from a tractor garage and got the job done! Beautiful! But there's more...

My chain then snapped in my second moto and I had to send out an SOS to BC to come up with some spare parts and his toolbox. Oh we'll at least my £2.99 chocolate spanners are still doing their job till he gets here and rounding bolts off like champions to keep him busy.

[Handwritten signature]
#12!



DUST DEVILS!

BRITS BATTLE ELEMENTS AND EACH OTHER IN SOUTH AMERICAN EPIC

Britain was well represented at this year's Dakar Rally. With seven riders entered in the gruelling 8,000km race across South America, the Brits achieved some notable success. Five riders reached the finish line in Santiago, Chile with the Front Row GB squad of KTM mounted Stan Watt and Tim Forman delivering the best results. Excelling throughout the 14 stages Watt and Forman finished 25th and 26th respectively and were only separated by a slender 41 seconds!

Forman, who was making his debut ride in the Dakar Rally, also ended it as one of the leading rookies. "It's been an amazing experience. I've tried to keep it steady but in the last few days I started to push harder and the riding has been good. It's unbelievable that after such a long race Stan and myself are so close. I pushed hard over the last couple of days to catch him but it didn't quite happen."

Finishing behind them was another Dakar rookie Lyndon Poskitt (Front Row GB KTM). Just intent on reaching the finishing line, Poskitt achieved much more than that on stage eight. Delivering by far his best stage result of the rally, Poskitt managed to finish the stage in ninth position and become the first British rider since John Deacon to claim a top 10 result. Unfortunately, a couple of navigation and mechanical issues set him back to end the race in 46th position.

Si Pavey is one of the veterans of the Dakar Rally having competed in the event on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. Armed with his Delta Kunstaffe Husqvarna Pavey rode a solid and determined race to reach Santiago 59th overall.

Opting to contest the malle-moto class for riders with absolutely no outside assistance Welshman Craig Bounds faced the most daunting Dakar. With only a small spares box to work from Bounds battled his way through the pain of a ruptured disc in his back – sustained midway through the race – to reach the finish line in Santiago 83rd in the overall classification but a fantastic 13th overall in malle-moto.

Unfortunately both James West (Sherco) and Paul Jay (KTM) failed to reach Santiago.



Tim Forman storms to a stunning 26th place finish in his rookie Dakar

© Maragni M. KTM Images

JONTY'S BOX

BETTER OFF ALONE?

WOULD THE WORLD'S BIGGEST AND BEST HARD ENDUROS BENEFIT FROM BEING BROUGHT TOGETHER AS A WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP?

Words by Future 7 Media Photo by flohagena.com/Red Bull Content Pool

This is somewhat of a hypothetical question but how can we truly know if a sport would be better off if it had a bona fide world championship? I'm talking about the extreme and hard enduro scene. It's well established seemingly as popular if not more popular than ever yet doesn't have a recognised championship or champion. Equally, does it matter if it doesn't have any kind of world championship status?

Ultimately, it would be hard to really know other than there being an Extreme World Championship or whatever it would be called and then comparing that with what we have now. But I guess we can look to other off-road motorcycling disciplines for clues.

Arguably the biggest off-road motorcycle event in the world is Dakar. It's a once-a-year stand alone event that has everything going for it – history, romance, mystery, danger, adventure... you get the picture. It casts an immeasurable shadow over the FIM Rally World Championship – for bikes not the WRC – and is a true one-off. I can't think of any rider that wouldn't want to take a Dakar victory over a RWC title. It simply can't be replicated – it's been tried but 'Dakar' branded events haven't come close to delivering what the real Dakar does. The Dakar doesn't need any accompanying events to support it.

I guess today's hard enduro scene is where the European indoor enduro scene was at a few years ago – strong, full of enthusiasm, well received and possibly with visions of grandeur. Some within the sport would like more recognition, others are happy the way things are now. While there's growing 'factory' involvement it's a scene where the pros and semi-pros are very much in the minority.

The perfect example of why the hard enduro scene wouldn't want to become a world championship would have to be the Indoort Trials World Championship. Why? Because Mr Bou aside it's painfully dull. A discipline that should be thrilling audiences the world over is – as a form of indoor entertainment – utter sh*t.

What the riders can and do occasionally do is breathtaking but the fact that they're all so focused on chasing world championship points has sucked the fun right out of the events.

A 'tour' like the X Games becomes in 2013 is possibly the best way forward and arguably – and unofficially – what the hard enduro scene already is. With the exception of the Roof of Africa the concept of the 'Big Seven' has been put together by us Europeans, riding mainly European manufactured machinery, riding in predominantly European events. It's very much a one-sided view of what any possible championship should or could be. Sure there aren't too many hard enduro events in India or Asia but there could be and there certainly are in Australia and in the States which merit inclusion.

If the analogy that Together Everyone Achieves More rings true then maybe the world's best hard enduro events and those involved in them would be better off united. But isn't that kind of how things are at the moment? Just without an FIM certificate awarded to the winner at the end of the season.

One reason for giving hard/extreme events more recognition is because to many, certainly those in countries like Austria, Romania, Germany even, they're what enduros should be. To many if not most of the competitors at Erzberg the Enduro World Championship is a kind of low-fat enduro. Hard enduro events are a much truer reflection of what they do of a weekend than the EWC.

The way I see it is that the hard enduro scene is in pretty good shape as it is. But enforcing the rules that would come with being a part of an official 'championship' would strip away the character of each event.

What makes each event work in its own unique way and what has made events such as the Gilles Lalay and others work in the past is that they are 'one man's vision' events. And that's the way they need to stay...

Jonty



Graham Jarvis is just one of a few Brits with a factory contract

HEAD HUNTED!

BECAUSE BRITISH BEEF IS JUST BEEFIER

The Tough One marked the start of the 2013 hard enduro season and saw a couple of new additions to the paddock. Showing increased support for the growing hard enduro scene both Husaberg and Beta will be official represented in 2013 with British riders fronting each squad.

With news breaking of Graham Jarvis' previous team 'Team Flite' withdrawing from competition Husaberg acted fast to keep Jarvis onboard.

Quickly setting up the Husaberg Extreme Racing Team the Swedish manufacture will have three riders contesting all of the seven major hard enduro events. Led by Jarvis the team also includes the Spanish duo of Alfredo Gomez and Xavi Galindo.

Though Jarvis needs little introduction, Gomez is one of the up-and-coming young riders of the sport. The former Junior Trials World Champion switched to hard enduro in 2012 and claimed numerous top five

results along with a podium result at the Extreme XL Lagares in Portugal.

Galindo – who will act as team manager – will also compete in selected events through the year.

Creating quite a stir in the paddock was the Italian Beta Extreme Team. Fielding the Hemingway brothers – Ben and Dan – the newly introduced Beta squad achieved a solid result at the first outing with Ben ending The Tough One in sixth position.



YOUNG GUN!

SOUTH AFRICAN SPEEDSTER FIRES INTO ACTION AT THE TOUGH ONE

After his breakthrough win at the 2012 season ending Roof of Africa, 16-year old Wade Young has secured a deal that will see him contest both selected rounds of the hard enduro series and also the EWC for 2013. Working with a German based Husaberg supported team Young got his season underway at the recent Tough One. While not able to repeat his winning success from the Roof of Africa Young was more than pleased with his results at what was his first time riding in mud.

"Growing up in South Africa I've never really see a lot of mud before so this was definitely a new experience for me," laughed Young. "I had hoped to do a bit better than 12th but considering the conditions I'm pleased with how I rode."

"This year will be a really big season for me and I'm thankful to get the opportunity to race in Europe. My plan is to race as much rounds of EWC and hard enduro as possible. I'll also fit in the South African enduro series, so it's going to be a busy year."



WHO'S THE DADDY?

KNIGHTER'S PRE-SEASON IS PARTICULARLY PEACHY

This year is already shaping up to be an exciting one for David Knight. After deciding to run his own privateer team Knighter.net Honda for his assault on the Enduro 2 World Championship, the Manxman also recently become a father for the first time.

Following a nervy wracking Christmas waiting for the due date to arrive, David's partner Emma gave birth to a baby boy, Finley Paul Knight, 7.5lbs, on Wednesday January 24. Congratulations to the pair of you from us all at DBR.



MANX GAS!

MCCANNY LEADS SPANISH SQUAD IN EWC

The Gas Gas Factory Enduro Team has seen a major shakeup during the winter months. Considerably slimming down their line up for 2013 the Spanish manufacture now sees Manx youngster Danny McCanney take over from Ivan Cervantes as the team leader.

With Cervantes jumping ship to KTM, McCanney will spearhead Gas Gas' assault of the Enduro Junior World Championship. It's a brave move for Gas Gas to effectively eliminate their line-up of Senior class riders but with McCanney focused on securing the Enduro Junior for title in 2013 it's a move that may pay off.

Joining Danny McCanney as an official rider will once again be Laia Sanz. The defending Women's world champion will attempt to retain her title.

New for 2013, the team will also field a squad of Junior riders. Chilean's Diego Rojas, Esteban Lanz and Guatemala's Oscar Bethancourt will contest both the EWC and the Spanish Enduro Championship under the Gas Gas School of Champions banner.

WHERE'S CHAD?

WHY REEDY'S NOT ON THE PACE...

When most racers start out a championship with consecutive fourth-place finishes they're pretty happy but when Chad Reed started out the 2013 Monster Energy/AMA Supercross Series with fourth-place finishes in the first two rounds he was incredibly pissed off. "It's frustrating because all off-season we struggled with certain things," Reed said. "We showed up at the first race and we struggled with those same things. You've been doing it long enough to think that you would have it all sorted, but you've been doing it long

enough to also know where you need to be to be fast and competitive."

Reed recovered for third place at round three in Anaheim, and then in Oakland he was competitive throughout practice but was part of a turn-two pileup that ruined that main event. "Yeah, I mean, the effort is there and the want is there but the comfort hasn't been there," Reed said. "So it's not like I've been rolling over and trying to just ride it out. I'm trying to do what I can do with what I've got to work with. We were a lot better today. The motorcycle we showed up with is the one I raced on so it's a step in the right direction."

FAST PROPHET!

JESSY NELSON PREDICTS OAKLAND OUTCOME...

After the first timed practice in Oakland TLD/Lucas Oil Honda's Jessy Nelson made a prophetic observation. "Dude, Eli Tomac almost landed on me at one point out there," Nelson said. "He always starts out kind of out of control but fast and then gets smoother as the night goes on. He's going really fast. I think if anyone is going to beat him right now it's probably going to be him."

In the main event Tomac got a bad start and as he was moving up through the field he went down – hard – in the whoops. He wasn't knocked out (possibly due to wearing the 6D helmet featured in American Idiot in the last issue) but he was shaken up bad enough to be forced to drop out of the race – he beat himself just as Jessy predicted.



© Ray Archer

BLAME CANADA?

JAKE'S AT FAULT FOR THE STRANGEST NO-SCORE IN SUPERCROSS HISTORY...

At Phoenix Motoconcepts Racing's Jake Canada was black-flagged during the Lites main event although technically he wasn't disqualified. Here's what happened... In the AMA all helmets are required to have a Hat's Off device inside which is basically an air bladder that can be inflated in order to help remove an injured racer's helmet.

Before the start of the race, the AMA checks every racer's helmet to make sure the air-bladder inflation

nipple is visible. Canada's wasn't and his mechanic had to run back to the pits to get the helmet with the proper equipment inside. He got back just as the race was about to start and Canada put on his helmet and then set off without strapping it tight.

The AMA noticed and he was black flagged in order so he could stop and strap his helmet up but instead he just went back to the pits. He went from running 12th to scoring a single point for his 20th place finish.

SUPERSIZED!

IS BIGGER ALWAYS BETTER?

Round three of the AMA supercross series was supposed to be in Los Angeles' Dodger Stadium but the stadium needed renovating and the race was moved over to Anaheim's Angel Stadium instead. Angel Stadium's floor is actually a bit bigger than the floor at Dodger Stadium but Feld and Dirt Wurx utilized the same track design and just stretched it out a bit to fit. That meant that the jumps were bigger and the gaps in the rhythm lane went from about 25 feet to 31 or so. And that ultimately gets part of the credit for helping Kevin Windham make the decision to retire as of that event. He was thinking a lot about it throughout the off-season and in the early weeks of racing but the bigger jumps were the straw that broke the camel's back.

DNF FOR L&M

SHORT'S LEFT HIGH AND DRY AS TEAM FOLDS...

Prior to the start of the 2013 season rumours were swiftly circulating that the L&M team co-owned by Larry Brooks and Jeremy McGrath was having financial trouble. The team started out in 2012 with a sponsorship from Supercross.com and reports were that Supercross.com didn't pay the bills so Brooks and McGrath went to an old sponsor and pulled out Chaparral for the team for the remainder of 2012.

Going into 2013 the hope was that they would get a new major sponsor but instead they showed up with Chaparral on the shrouds and the front fenders. Brooks denied the team was having financial trouble prior to round one but by round four Andrew Short was on a privateer Honda with no sponsors because L&M folded.



UNDER THE KNIFE!

BLAKE BAGGETT TAKES TIME OUT FOR WRIST SURGERY

Monster Energy/Pro Circuit Kawasaki's Blake Baggett had big hopes coming into the 2013 250SX West championship but that all ended about 200 feet into the title chase. Jessy Nelson grabbed the holeshot at Anaheim 1 then went over the bars collecting Baggett and his team-mate Martin Davalos in the wreck. Baggett suffered a dislocated and fractured right wrist and had a cast on it by the following Monday. He cut it off that afternoon and showed up at Phoenix to try and give it a go and made it almost all the way through practice before he went down again because of his weak wrist so he called it a night and had surgery the following Monday. He'll be out at least until the West series resumes in April at Seattle.



AMERICAN IDIOT

K-DUB QUILTS!

AFTER 19 YEARS OF RACING AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL KEVIN WINDHAM ANNOUNCED HIS RETIREMENT, EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY, AT ANAHEIM 2 – ROUND THREE OF THE 2013 MONSTER ENERGY/AMA SUPERCROSS SERIES...

Words and photo by Steve Cox

Previously Kevin Windham's stated goal was to race until the end of the 2014 season for two reasons. First, he obviously likes the number 14. Second, it would've marked 20 years as a pro. However, people close to Windham knew he was probably retiring sooner rather than later.

"Thursday at the first Anaheim he came up to me and we had a heart-to-heart," said Chad Reed. "It was an interesting talk, and at that point I knew Kevin was done at the end of this year. It was pretty cool to have respect – not only as two fierce competitors over the years – but as friends. For him to come and ask my opinion and get my feeling on certain things, I thought was pretty cool. As recently as Thursday [before Anaheim 2] we were out at the test track and he said, 'remember my talk with you at Anaheim 1? I've decided in a couple weeks I'm going to announce it.' So I knew it was coming but he said he was going to finish out the season."

"I think talking to him today there's just certain rhythm sections on the track and certain things he's not comfortable doing at speed anymore and he's not willing to lay it on the line. I think at that point you know and that was my advice to him from my cousin Craig Anderson just recently retiring. With what he told me, it was parallel with what Kevin was telling me. So I just said, 'Man, what's the difference between 19 and 20 years and 14 more races, when you're just not going to be happy and you could get hurt?' He's had an awesome career and it's going to be sad to not see him out there."

There are a lot of things that people talk about when the subject of Kevin Windham comes up. Most of them are positive, too. Any negatives he has against him have to do with the fact that he never won a National championship but considering he spent the bulk of his career racing against Ricky Carmichael that's not that crazy.

People talk about his textbook, downright beautiful riding style. They talk about his natural ability on a dirt bike. They talk about how, if it's muddy, he is a shoo-in for the win if his bike holds together. Lately, they talk about his transfers during opening ceremonies, in the dark, with a spotlight on him. But one thing doesn't come up quite enough and that is that he's just a really good dude.

And this is probably the most important thing anyone needs to know about Kevin Windham – especially younger racers. Windham wasn't always a winner. He had seasons where he was just flat-out off the pace. It's almost impossible not to in a career that spans nearly two full decades. And in a sport where the saying is you're only as good as your last race having bad seasons – not to mention a couple of them in a row – is career suicide. Racers just disappear because once they lose that touted factory status only a couple racers have ever really gotten it back again. You lose a ride and you're done the vast majority of the time.

But the key to Kevin Windham is that he never lost his ride. From his days at Yamaha early on, to the Honda factory, to Suzuki (where he broke his femur and disappeared for almost a year), and then to his racing career at the Factory Connection team – currently known as GEICO Honda – he always had people backing him. Why? Because he's just a really good dude.

Fans know it. Racers know it. Media knows it. Having Kevin Windham on your team has always been good for your team and for your sponsors which just makes it good business.

Kevin Windham is proof that the key to longevity in a motocross career isn't just going fast it's being a good person, because the only way you can be a spoiled brat pain in the ass and still have a job is if you're winning.



Cyril Despres makes a splash on his way to a fifth Dakar victory



FIVE ALIVE!

RED BULL KTM'S CYRIL DESPRES HOLDS HIS NERVE THROUGHOUT 14 STAGES OF THE DAKAR RALLY TO SECURE HIS FIFTH WIN...

Words by **Future 7 Media** Photos by **Maragni M. KTM Images**

In what proved to be one of the most unpredictable races in recent years it was the dependable Despres that saw off all his rivals to reach the finish line in Santiago, Chile as the winner. With the 8000km race starting in Lima, Peru on January 5 all eyes were on the Frenchman to see if he could successfully defend his Dakar Rally title.

With team-mate Marc Coma forced to withdraw due to ongoing shoulder injuries many believed that Despres would have an easy run to his fifth title. What followed could be nothing further from the truth as Despres faced new rivals and troubles of his own.

On the short 13km long stage one Chile's Chaleco Lopez (KTM) immediately made his intentions to win the rally known by taking the stage win. Despres, who opted for a tactical approach ended the stage in fifth while

Honda's Helder Rodrigues finished even further back in 29th position. With the rally beginning in earnest on day two, Lopez, who was first on the road struggled to maintain his winning pace. Running into navigation issues he slipped back down the running order to a lowly 20th. Despres also ran into trouble when he became stuck in a towering sand dune. That mistake cost him over eight minutes as Husqvarna's Joan Barreda blasted his way to the stage win and an early lead.

But Barreda's his lead was short lived. Forced to limp home on stage three due to a broken wheel he dropped back to 17th overall. Annoyed with his previous day's blunder Lopez carved his way through the field to grab the win. That result put him back into contention by moving him up to second again.

But just when it looked like Despres had restored the normal running order

he got lost and the leader board changed again. KTM were knocked off the top step as Yamaha's Olivier Pain took control of proceedings. Pain, although unable to win a stage kept control of the race lead until stage seven.

On stage seven a new winner emerged when Kurt Caselli (KTM), who was Coma's last minute replacement, claimed his first stage win at an average speed of 72mph over the 430km long stage. But his result was overshadowed with the news of Despres. The Frenchman suffered serious gearbox issues and with the stage marking the first of a two-part marathon stage he was forced to swap his engine with fellow competitor Marek Dabrowski. That engine change cost him 15 minutes dropping him down to fifth overall.

On stage eight the race lead

changed hands again with Pain's team mate David Casteu taking control as Lopez, Caselli, Pain and many others got lost. Following on from the rest day, Despres finally clinched his first stage win of the race. That victory moved him up into second overall behind his team mate Ruben Faria. Now with luck back on his side, the Frenchman set about taking control of proceedings and with another solid result on stage 10 he was finally back in the lead of the race.

It was a position he wouldn't relinquish. As the race grew closer to Santiago the Frenchman crossed the finish line as the 2013 Dakar Rally champion. Faria held off the repeated challenge from Lopez to secure the runner up position. With Lopez third, Slovakian Ivan Jakes (KTM) was a surprising fourth while Joan Pedrero added to KTM's celebrations by completing the top five.



DANGEROUS TESTING TIMES!

LEE AND THE LPE TEAM PUT IN THE HOURS IN PURSUIT OF PERFECTION...

Words by Lee Dunham Photo by Rick Blyth

Testing, testing, testing! It's been a month of moving things in the right direction and we're working really hard at the moment to get a good chassis and engine set-up taking knowledge from last season's bike and making them better! Although it's sometimes a tedious and drawn out process – mainly resulting in long days – it's paying off and I'm excited to start racing already. This year I've got some excellent people around me, loads of knowledge and I can tell it's going to be a good year.

We headed to Antarctica – or Fatcat Motoparc as the boss there calls it – for the Kawasaki UK team and rider launch. Considering the South was pretty much at a standstill from the amount of white stuff we had oop naaaarh where it's usually – excuse my French – bloody Baltic it was absolutely fine! The track was prepared immaculately as always and there weren't even any boggy or sloppy parts – winner! I jumped on my new Kawi 450 and had my suspension guy KB Racing working all day long so we got a good set up. Since then we've been putting more time in on the bike and everything is progressing nicely.

Like most press days we had to do static and action shots. The action shots usually involve a sandy corner or a jump – at FatCat that means sandy corners! I've found my new team-mate Dorren is the worst person to go after as he basically smashed every berm for six and left no corners rideable. He hit some of the corners so hard most of the sand ended up on the M18 although they did look really cool. It was pretty nice to see the images afterwards and to be booted out in fresh kit. Luckily Factory Pink kitted me in some swanky winter clothing too for the paddock so I didn't get too chilly.

Usually around this time of year I head out to the Alps and ride snowboard for a week or two – there's nothing better than mincing around a mountain hitting kickers and throwing powder

turns down and getting some serious roost on. Oh wait there is – the waffle cafes! They're incredible but that's a different story as I didn't go this year. Instead I opted for a short break away to the Spanish sun – not to ride but just to chill with family. We had an awesome time that was much needed and the weather was surprisingly warmer than expected!

Last month I told you I had a track in a field local to me and Sharky and I were training up there a few weeks back. What I'm about to tell you about is one of the few times I've almost had to pull off the track from laughing so much.

We were getting to the end of a moto and there's a deep right hander that's pretty gnarly at the best of times but the night before it had rained so it was a tad greasy. Sharky has gone into the rut on a two-fiddy smoker, launched the clutch as if on a sand dune at Weston thinking like usual he had no grip when suddenly it hooks up. He comes off the back with legs and arms throwing all sorts of shapes, has a massive swap, almost hits our board man who's not even on the same part of the track and smashes his front mudguard clean off! I've come around to the same corner, seen Sharky – now aka The Bullet – dust himself off and step back onto his weapon of choice to finish his moto off! He came back in looking like he had done the Romanians but luckily not in the slightest bit injured. Actually after reading it back it doesn't sound that funny – maybe it was one of those you had to be there moments.

I've been trying to organise my training schools too! We're battling a few obstacles track wise at another location but hopefully everything will be up and running again soon. Hoping we can sort it all out just in time for some decent weather.

See you all next month. Till then plenty of wheelies, skids and whisky throttle!

Lee Dunham
#281



Ruben Faria takes second overall while Kurt Caselli (below) has to be content with a stage win



MEMBER OF THE MONTH

*If you go down to the Arenacross today,
You're sure of a big surprise,
If you go down to the Arenacross today,
You'd better not go in disguise,
'Cause every smart person that ever there was
Is visiting the DBR stand just because
Today's the day that Hodders is taking pictures!*

The coolest kids in London and Belfast were queuing up to stick their heads into Hodders' hole so they could become a **DBR cover star** and get entered into a free competition to win an overnight stay and riding day at **Wheeldon Off-Road Centre**. Here's a selection of Sarah's favourite snacks, erm, we mean snaps...



PHOTO OF THE MONTH!

Teaching your toddler to read **DBR** while taking a toilet break is a fine idea but teaching your toddler to read **DBR** while taking a toilet break with their trolleys up and the seat down is bound to get messy! Bad good work there **Matt Hacker!**



MEMBER OF THE MONTH

The **dirtZone** member of the month award goes to **Daniel O'Sullivan**. But why did Hank pick Daniel over the thousands of other **dirtZone** members? We could mention that he's uploaded a tanker load of content since joining the sickest social network on the planet. We could mention that he updates his status more frequently than David Beckham does his hairstyle or that he's had the street smarts to link his **Twitter** account to his **dirtZone** account. But best of all Daniel spent hours looking for a mobile solution to his **dirtZone** addiction and came up trumps when he found the **BeAddictive App** in the Apple App Store.

VIDEO OF THE MONTH!

Trey Canard's crash last season was one that most riders don't come back from but the #41 racer knew he had a higher calling. When others doubted and the pain progressed he knew he was destined to race again. This is the story of Trey's year long journey from back injury to the starting gate of the 2013 **Supercross** season as he strives to put himself back on top.



RADIO GA GA

Every Wednesday night from eight until 10 it's the Off-Road Show with Chris Warren Jnr on the UK's only online radio station worth listening to – check it out at www.bikerfm.co.uk.



SWEET TWEETS



@snowymx31

Having a read through my @dbrmagazine article while eating brekkie!



@carlunnmx

Loving this shot guys. Sweet!

@nevsta272 @arenacrossuk @sr75worldteam



@jacksonevans1

After a days training there's nowt better than a brew and a catch up with @dbrmagazine on the throne while waiting on the bath

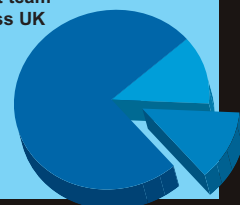
@brymac121

Up late last night finishing my @dbrmagazine column. Paying the price now #redeye #bawbag #hardshoulderlovin' #pendrich #kawasaki

POLL OF THE MONTH!

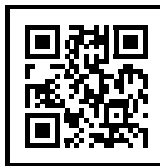
Who will claim the best team award in the Arenacross UK championship?

- SR75 World Team
- Buildbase Honda
- Maxxis Kawasaki



Muc-Off

If your **dirtZone** post appears on this page you'll win a one-litre bottle of marvellous Muc-Off bike cleaner* – unless you live outside Britain in which case we'll send you some of Muc-Off's brilliant brushes and wipes instead...
*One bottle per member per month



WIN! WIN! WIN! WIN! WIN!

A BLUE CONTOUR ROAM 2 ACTION CAMERA...

Being northern folk we love stuff that's easy to use which is why we're massive fans of Contour's Roam 2 camera that's as simple and effective as The Bear.

Unlike The Bear though the Contour Roam 2 is light and sleek and has the ability to shoot web-ready footage at 60fps or Full HD at around half that frame rate. It's super easy to switch on – and off – even for The Bears with big daft paws and has a handy 3.5 hour battery life, an adjustable 170 degree wide angle lens and laser alignment so you know exactly what The Bear you're shooting!

Although the Roam 2 only costs a

measly £179.99 (and is available right now from www.actioncameras.co.uk) we've decided to hook a lucky brother – or sister – up with a brand new Roam 2 of their own for free! Zilch! Nada! Ooh, we're just too kind...

To be in with a shout of winning this awesome action camera we want to know the answer to this easy peasy lemon squeezy question.

What does FPS actually mean?

Is it: **A: Frames Per Second**
B: Flicks Per Scrotum
C: Fran's Pear Sundae
D: French Pie Squidges

If you know the answer – or can differentiate the letter A from three others then aim your computer at www.dirtbikerider.com and follow the competitions link in [dirtZone](#).

Or if you're all high tech and that you can scan this [QR code](#) with your smartphone and it'll take you right there. The comp closes on **March 8** and the first randomly drawn correct answer will win a **Roam 2** as well as a signed picture of The Bear. True story (except for the bit about The Bear's signed picture – that bit was a lie).

If you're not feeling lucky just log on to www.actioncamers.co.uk and p-p-pick up a **Roam 2** of your own...



ASTERISK

CYTO CELL KNEE BRACES

With the all new Asterisk Cyto Cell Asterisk offers superior protection at a price that is easy on the wallet. This sleek and slim new brace features a fiberglass tibial plateau capturing frame design, sleek adjustable compression control cuffs, a natural free motion, rolling-gliding hinge, simple and stress free fastening and a fused patella cup system. Sweet.

Price: £199 each

Supplier: madison.co.uk

Contact: 0870 034 7226

ALIAN

LITHIUM ULTRALIGHT BATTERY

Ever wondered what kind of magic makes them there electric-start bikes fire into life? Well wonder no more ye luddites because here is the answer – tis batteries. While some stock batteries can be pretty cumbersome these aftermarket Aliant jobbies are way lighter and better performing than traditional lead acid type batteries thanks to their lithium iron phosphate technology. Confused? Yup, me too but I guess lighter, high performance and competitively priced are the key words here. Got it? Good.

Price: from £129.99

Supplier: racefx.co.uk

Contact: 0845 450 1448

THH

TX23 VELOCITY HELMET

With an all-new design for 2013 the TX23's stylish shape and top features set it apart from all other competitors in its price bracket. Superb venting and a dual stage lining combine to provide a helmet that's suitable for both pros and clubmen alike.

Price: £74.99

Supplier: racefx.co.uk

Contact: 0845 450 1448

RIP N ROLL

XHAUST BUNG

It's imperative that you block off your tailpipe when you wash your weapon so you don't damage what's deep inside. The good news is Rip n Roll have got bungs that make both two and four-stroke pipes absolutely watertight and they cost less than £5 each n'all so even if you've got a twin-pipe Honda you can seal things up for under a tenner Bargain!

Price: from £3.99

Supplier: ripnroll.co.uk

Contact: 01483 425506

THOR

PHASE COIL RACEWEAR

You don't have to be a defending supercross champ like Ryan Villopoto to wear this super-sweet THOR Phase Coil racewear although it doesn't matter if you are because it's designed and built to withstand the rigours of racing at even the highest and most brutal level. Available now through the Madison dealer network at a very reasonable price indeed!

Price: Pants £89.99 Jersey £29.99

Supplier: madison.co.uk

Contact: 0870 034 7226

APICO

STEEL BIKE STAND

If you need something strong n' safe to park your bike on then you could do a lot worse than this steel stool stand from Apico that's available in a stunning range of colours and at £25.99 is an absolute steal.

Price: £25.99

Supplier: apico.co.uk

Contact: 01282 473190





SMITH FUEL V.2 SWEAT-X GOGGLE

Protect your eyes from roost and sweat with these Fuel V.2 Sweat-X goggles from Smith that have super-absorptive F.A.T three-layer face foam for superior fit and sealing capabilities. The frame and strap feature custom graphics while the lens is a badass red mirror jobbie. Compatible with Smith roll and tear-offs the Fuel V.2 Sweat-X goggles also come with a protective bag that'll keep 'em safe in your kit bag!

Price: £49.99
Supplier: racefx.co.uk
Contact: 0845 450 1448



JT RACING LIMITED EDITION DALMATION RACEWEAR

If you're a wannabe Cruella de Vil or just a fan of the original dogger – that's Ron Lechien – then you'll wanna get some of this very limited edition Dalmation racewear from the company that invented cool. That's JT Racing...

Price: Pants £159.99 Jersey £54.99
Gloves £34.99
Supplier: decade-europe.com
Contact: 01792 469811

APICO MX SOCKS

If you like to keep your feet meat reet neat then pull up a seat because Apico have got a sweet treat for your petite toe fleet at a price that just can't be beat, alreet?

Price: £8.99
Supplier: apico.co.uk
Contact: 01282 473190



ARAI VX-3 CULT HELMET

Arai's awesome VX-3 gets a brand new colourway for 2013 – and it's called the Cult. While only you will know if the design floats your boat it's no secret that the VX-3 is one of the most protective motocross helmets available on this planet so if you wanna look after your noggin a VX-3 is the ideal place to put your head!

Price: £469.99
Supplier: apico.co.uk
Contact: 01282 473190



PIRELLI SCORPION RACING TYRES

While there's nowt particularly new about Pirelli's world championship winning Scorpion MX tyres their availability around the UK will now be greater than ever – thanks to the Italian manufacturer's hook up with dirt bike distribution legends Apico – which is awesome news for all serious racers out there. Go check 'em out at your local dirt bike dealer...

Price: various
Supplier: apico.co.uk
Contact: 01282 473190

DC SHOE SPARTAN HI SHOES

If mama, papa or baby needs new shoes then one of you needs to log on to www.freestylextreme.com and check out these DC Spartan Hi jobbies that come in a bunch of different colours and signature styles including these Travis Pastrana and Robbie Maddison doozies!

Price: see website
Supplier: freestylextreme.com
Contact: 0117 304 9561



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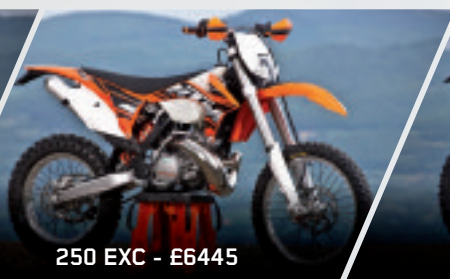
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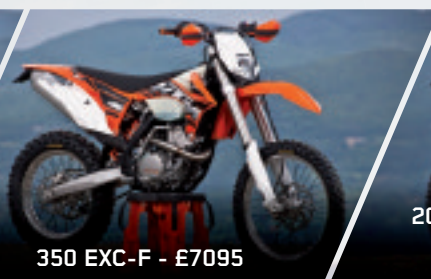
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Please contact for full details Prices subject to change. Offer may be withdrawn without notice.





MIXED UP!

THE 2013 AMA SUPERCROSS SERIES GETS OFF TO A SURPRISINGLY STRANGE START...

WORDS BY SUTTY AND STEVE COX PHOTOS BY STEVE COX AND RAY ARCHER

★ It was meant to be a huge battle between the big four but so far in the 2013 series the AMA supercross formbook's been tossed away like a tear off over a triple. ★ Okay, after the slowest of starts ★ defending champ Ryan Villopoto's now back doing the business but who'd have predicted that he'd only be third in points after the opening four rounds while t'other Ryan – that's Dungey – is fourth with Chad Reed fifth and James Stewart back in 11th! Like I said – the formbook's been ripped apart and the predictions in our preview a

couple of month's back were way, way off the mark! Still, that's why they run the races... so what has been going on?

I don't think anybody could've predicted that Davi Millsaps would come out swinging like he has and after fighting for the win at round one the Georgia peach has been surprisingly consistent and run the red plate ever since. The Rockstar Suzuki rider is seven points ahead of Honda's Trey Canard whose comeback from a broken back is nothing short of miraculous. Before this year's season opener Dr Trey had raced

something like twice in the past 18 months and then he comes back and challenges for the win straight off. Amazing. What's even more remarkable about Trey's 2-5-2-4 results is the fact he's crashed at least once in two out of the four main events held so far.

Villopoto's done his share of crashing too although he got all those out of the way at Anaheim 1 hitting the deck several times before rolling home to a 16th place finish. Since then he's been awesome and aside from being outpaced by rookie Justin Barcia at round two has been the man ever since



although he's still nine points behind the points pace setter.

So far Dungey and Reed have failed to show any of the magic that made them champions and James Stewart has been very average blaming his run of 8-7-12-19 on a knee injury – he's undoubtedly hurting but c'mon!

The other surprise grande – as they say in France – has been Bam Bam Barcia who smoked 'em in Anaheim and then bust his nose apart in Phoenix when he came up hell short on a triple jump. Going back to

that win in Anaheim for a moment – how impressive was that? To win only his second 450 supercross race at a stadium he'd never raced in, on dirt he's never raced on is amazing and not even something the GOAT Ricky Carmichael or supercross king Jeremy McGrath managed in their illustrious careers. This long haired, moustachioed kid is something very special – and in years to come will probably be a multi-time champion himself.

Of course, he'll have to contend with 250SX maestro Eli Tomac in 2014 and

beyond and if Eli can ride a 450 like he has been a 250 then everyone might just be in trouble. The GEICO Honda star had been head n' shoulders above the rest of the 250 riders until a monster get off at round four left him sidelined by the whoops. This allowed Ken Roczen to take his first win of the year and the series lead with it which should set up an interesting end to their short nine round series.

Anyhoo, that's enough from me – over to Steve Cox for play-by-play action from Anaheim, Phoenix, Anaheim and Oakland... >>



After almost a year out Trey Canard's second place finish at Anaheim 1 blows minds

FIRST BLOOD!

THE SERIES KICK OFF IN ANAHEIM WITH WINS FOR DAVI MILLSAPS AND ELI TOMAC...

Defending 450 champ Ryan Villopoto is fast all day although his starts leave much to be desired. In the opening heat race Villopoto starts well outside the top 10 but he's easily the fastest racer on the track as he works his way through the field quickly. With two laps to go in the eight lap race he's close enough to leader Justin Barcia to put a wheel in on him three different times but settles for second.

In the Main Event Rockstar Energy Suzuki's Davi Millsaps grabs the holeshot over Team Honda's Trey Canard and Barcia while Chad Reed is forced wide in the first turn and comes out sixth before quickly moving up to fifth. Within a lap Weimer jumps in behind Reed to grab sixth place but the big story is defending champ Villopoto. Villopoto gets another terrible start in

the main rounding the first lap in 13th and as he's moving up through the field on lap five he comes up short at the end of a rhythm lane and goes over the berm. Fortunately for him he doesn't fall but he does lose a spot and a lot more time.

Within a couple more laps Villopoto finally breaks into the top 10 grabbing ninth on the seventh lap from Justin Brayton. But as Villopoto is working on two-time champ James Stewart – who hurt himself in practice and almost didn't race the night show – for the eighth spot things become disastrous as he jumps to the inside of Stewart and lands on a Tuff Block causing him to go violently over the bars. He gets up limping and gets going again in 14th.

With his bars bent it makes things even tougher going for Villopoto and that leads to yet

another heavy get-off on lap 14 in the same rhythm lane that caused Villopoto's off-track excursion early in the race. Villopoto gets up without his right glove – which got ripped off in the crash – and with a bloody right hand. Having won the A1 opener for two years in a row the best RV can do this time around is a 16th place finish.

At the front Millsaps leads the entire race over Canard, Barcia and Dungey but Dungey goes down at around the halfway point and Barcia does similar. Once Canard has some breathing room behind him he makes his move on Millsaps with a few laps left, taking over the top spot only for Millsaps gather himself back up and then chase Canard back down making a pass on the final lap to take the win over Canard and Dungey with Reed and Weimer rounding out the top five.

LITES BITES!

ET BRINGS IT HOME...

TLD/Lucas Oil Honda's SX rookie Jessy Nelson takes the holeshot in the Main Event then immediately goes over the bars taking out some of the other predicted top racers in the series with him including 66 per cent of the Monster Energy/Pro Circuit Kawasaki squad. Blake Baggett is gathered up along with his team-mate Martin Davalos. Baggett gets up favoring his right wrist which he later finds out is partially dislocated and fractured while Davalos rides directly into the mechanic's area with a smashed radiator. But defending Lites West champ Eli Tomac makes it by the melee clean and goes on to lead all 15 laps of the main event going away in front of Red Bull KTM's Ken Roczen, Nelson's teammate Cole Seely, Rockstar Energy Suzuki's Jason Anderson and J-Star KTM's Malcolm Stewart.



Millsaps and the crew down in victory circle

FIVE MINUTES WITH...

...A1 WINNER DAVI MILLSAPS

DBR: What were you expecting coming into Anaheim and how did it live up to those expectations when the racing was over?

DM: "We have our own track down at Milestone [a local motocross facility in Riverside, California] so we don't really see anyone – we're by ourselves. I'm riding with the 250F guys and just hoping I'm going fast. At the test track, I feel like I go fast, so that's good, but I had a lot of preparation in the off-season this year compared to the last couple of years. We did a lot of testing and I did a lot of motos and a lot of sprints. I had a lot of bike time – a lot of seat time. I think at one point on a Supercross track I had 17 hours in 2 and a half weeks on my bike so it was quite a bit..."

DBR: Yeah quite a bit on your arms, hands and legs too!

DM: "Yeah! You know, just all of that preparation coming in and just no pressure being the underdog. Just going out and riding. I got the holeshot and I just rode."

DBR: Well, the thing is, you didn't really do that. You're making it sound like it was easy but Trey Canard got by you late in the race. How did you have the mental strength to go back after him again?

DM: "I don't know. That was probably the highlight of my night. You know getting passed like that late in the race when everyone thinks that I'm done and that I'm just going to settle for second... I dug down deep and found some good lines, took a breather and came back strong."

DBR: I don't think you've ever led the points in this class but you have been in championship situations in the Lites class. Looking down the road you're talking 15 more races. Are you even thinking about a championship at this point?

DM: "No, I'm just thinking about getting stronger. You know, I still have work to do. These guys have years of consistency – or at least a year of consistency. The only one who doesn't is Trey. I just have to go home and just keep working, working, working and training and just put my head down one weekend at a time."

DBR: How much lighter are you now than you were last year?

DM: "I'm actually the same weight."

DBR: Your face looks thinner, though!

DM: "Last year I lost a lot of fat and a lot of muscle. This year, I lost more fat but gained more lean muscle. I think that's what it looks like. Because everyone thinks I look sickly but I actually weigh the same if not a pound or two heavier."

DBR: But you're supporting all the weight with muscle...

DM: "Yeah, my six-pack is supporting it [laughs]."

DBR: One more thing... What's the difference – from a racing standpoint – when you have a kid? It has to sort of change your perspective on things. What it is like as a racer to have that change in your life?

DM: "It's pretty cool. Especially when I was on the podium and he had his hand on the trophy looking up at me. He just has no idea what's going on but you kind of melt when that happens. Even if you have the worst day you come home and he giggles and it makes it better. It makes it better. Take a crowd of 10,000 and he's going to pick you out of it. To me, that's pretty cool."

Eli Tomac takes the 250SX class by storm



© Happenworld.com



K-Roc opens his account with a second place finish



Reed holeshots his heat but it's Bam Bam who snatches it in the main event

PHOENIX NIGHTS!

IT'S A HONDA DOUBLE AS BAM BAM AND TOMAC TAKE MAXIMUM POINTS IN ARIZONA...

Barcia takes the Main Event holeshot over Millsaps, Reed, Villopoto and Weimer while Canard starts out sixth, Yoshimura Suzuki's James Stewart eighth and Dungey about 17th after having to get into the main event through the LCQ where he finishes second to Jimmy Albertson.

Villopoto goes down while running third on the second lap in a slick turn and gets up eighth behind Stewart. Barcia pulls away during the opening half of the race as Millsaps attempts to hold off Reed who's soon under attack from Canard and Villopoto as they work their way forward.

Canard gets Reed just past the halfway point for third, then wastes little time getting

around Millsaps and moving into second, while Villopoto follows Canard's example on both passes to move into third.

Villopoto continues to pressure Canard for second until the two take the white flag within striking distance of Barcia. On the final lap, Canard goes down in the same turn Villopoto did – also falling victim to the extremely slick racing surface. This mistake hands second place to Villopoto and third to Millsaps. Canard gets up in time to hold off Reed but doesn't have enough speed to do the upcoming triple and so Reed gets by as well.

At the finish, it's Barcia taking his first-ever 450cc Supercross victory over Villopoto, Millsaps, Reed, Canard, Weimer, Stewart and Dungey.



A solid ride for Millsaps means he keeps hold of the red plate



A second for RV is a step in the right direction



LITES BITES!

TOMAC TAKES TWO ON THE BOUNCE...

Blake Baggett has a cast put on his right wrist the Monday morning after Anaheim 1 but cuts it off himself in the afternoon in hopes he'll be able to race in Phoenix. He shows up and rides practice but is still favoring his injured wrist, then has another hard get-off and pulls out.

Tomac is a second and a half faster than anyone else in the field in practice and that carries into the main event where Davalos grabs the holeshot despite coming through the LCQ after a spectacular heat-race crash. Davalos leads the first half of the race until Tomac – who comes from the tail end of the top 10 – catches and passes him.

Tomac takes off for the win while Davalos finds himself trying to fight off Roczen for second. On the last lap, Roczen gets Davalos too to take second place for the second week in a row, while Davalos rides to a heroic third-place finish in front of Seely, Nelson and Tomac's GEICO Honda teammate Zach Osborne.



Barcia leads every lap on his way to the win

FIVE MINUTES WITH...

...ROOKIE 450 WINNER JUSTIN BARCIA!

DBR: Talk about the track tonight. It looked really slick out there...

JB: "This is crazy. The dirt is really slick here and definitely interesting and a new challenge for me because I'm not really used to this slick west-coast dirt. I've never really ridden it before – besides at the Honda track – and that's not really that great..."

DBR: How does it feel to win?

JB: "Unreal. I'm pretty stoked right now. I don't want to say that I didn't think it would come this soon but just for it to happen right here and right now is pretty awesome."

DBR: Compare this win to the Monster Energy Cup?

JB: "This is a lot better than the Monster Energy Cup. Monster Energy Cup was kind of wild for me. You know, getting used to the bike still and I felt really sketchy there. Tonight, I felt really smooth and fast. I was doing pretty much 51 second laps the whole beginning of the race and then toward the end I was doing 52s. One of those was 51s because I knew Villopoto was coming pretty hard but I was able to hold him off and get the win. Lappers were really tough tonight also toward the end of the race."

DBR: Tell me about your start.

JB: "Yeah, it was a good start. You know, I had first gate pick and I was a little worried about that. I picked my gate and then every other top guy went on the inside of me which is what I was afraid of so I thought it could be tough. But I ended up getting a really good jump and squeaked around them and put together good laps."

DBR: What was round one at Anaheim like for you?

JB: "It was the most stressful race I've ever had – just being my first A1 and I was really nervous. I was riding good, a little on the edge I think and ended up clicking neutral in one of the ruts on a little double before the whoops and ended my brains out. So, that was terrible. I was looking forward to being on the podium my first race but definitely going to Anaheim next week and trying to get some redemption and be back up there."

DBR: Were you hearing noises at the end of tonight's race? Did you feel like you might tighten up in this main?

JB: "Honestly, I felt good. I've been training hard so that's not a problem. I think I rode a little tight. I actually

got stuck behind Justin Brayton for like two laps near the end. He didn't want to move out of the way so that was kind of tough. He was riding pretty fast though so I just kind of tucked behind him for the last two laps. But yeah, I was a little nervous."

DBR: With how slick the track was how important was it to stay focused out there?

JB: "It's crazy how the track from the first lap to the 20th lap goes away so much. I've never seen that before in my life. Usually, I'm on the east coast and Lites and it's 15 laps and the track is good. But, out here, from the first lap to the 20th lap the track got so much choppy and slicker so it was pretty crazy. Definitely the main key was staying focused tonight."

DBR: How was it to know that you couldn't take it easy even with your big lead?

JB: "I definitely couldn't take it easy. I could see those guys behind me coming every single lap. In the beginning I was pulling, pulling, pulling and then toward the end they stepped it up a little bit. So, I kept a pretty decent gap and it was good."



LITES BITES!

ELI TAKES YET ANOTHER TRIP TO VICTORY CIRCLE...

TLD/Lucas Oil Honda's Cole Seely grabs his first holeshot of the season to start off the Anaheim 2 Lites main event. He's followed closely by Ken Roczen and Eli Tomac. With Tomac and Roczen going 1-2 in the first two main events of the season Seely has his work cut out but he seems game for it as he holds off the two championship contenders early in the race.

Just as Roczen looks to make a move to the lead Tomac blasts by him and then sets out after Seely. At first, Roczen falls back a bit but then gets a second wind. As Roczen closes in on Tomac Eli finally finds a way around Seely for the lead. From there Tomac races to his third straight victory but Roczen isn't done.

Wanting to stay on the tail of Tomac in the championship chase he gets Seely a lap later when Cole runs into a little trouble with a lapped rider – the top three are set duplicating the result from Anaheim 1. Tomac's team-mate Zach Osborne comes home fourth just in front of Jake Canada.

Clutches burn as the 250SX
class leaves the line



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RV STRIKES BACK!

VILLOPOTO FINALLY WINS ONE BUT MILLSAPS KEEPS HOLD OF THE SERIES LEAD...

The 450 class is a little weird at Anaheim 2 with both 2013 main event winners – Davi Millsaps and Justin Barcia – finding themselves in the LCQ. Barcia leads the LCQ early before Millsaps runs him down for the win, while Barcia takes the final transfer spot into the main event.

Monster Energy Kawasaki's Jake Weimer takes the holeshot from the outside in the points payer while Trey Canard grabs second. Canard takes over the lead on lap two while Barcia is beating on Weimer's back door. Barcia actually makes it by for second on the third lap before coming up incredibly short on one of the track's large triple jumps. He continues on for a straightaway and a half before he practically falls off the bike, pulling off his goggles to reveal a broken nose and a badly cut left eye. He drops out of the main right then and there.

Millsaps is next to go by Weimer for second and then Weimer's teammate Ryan Villopoto comes by for third and Chad Reed for fourth. Villopoto is on a mission, though, and goes by Weimer, Millsaps and Canard on successive laps to take the lead on lap six. From there he's never headed on his way to his first win of the 2013 season.

Canard hangs on for second for the entire main event while the battle for third – between Millsaps

and Reed – rages behind him until three laps to go when Millsaps slides out entering to the slick start straightaway handing the final podium spot to Reed. Millsaps remounts for fourth while Weimer holds off Ryan Dungey at the finish for fifth.



FIVE MINUTES WITH... REIGNING CHAMP RYAN VILLOPOTO

DBR: Talk a little about recovering from week one where you had a couple pretty big crashes and finished well behind and then building through the last couple weeks to get you back up here in the winner's circle again.

RV: "Obviously at Anaheim 1 everyone saw that I wasn't very good. Phoenix was better but I still made a couple of little mistakes. Each week, we worked on things with the bike and with myself and made progress. I think we made good changes throughout the day today to adjust to the track and I was happy with that. I thought the track was a good racing track."

"I think if they wouldn't have put that little bump in we would have been going 3-3-4 through the rhythm section. There's nothing that's going to stop our bikes from jumping the jumps that we jump, or the combinations that are out there. So, by doing that it makes it a much safer and a better track for racing. So I was happy with that. Obviously, I'm partial to it because I won..."


DBR: How did you set the pass up on Trey Canard?

RV: "It was good. Like I said, I thought the track was good for racing and I felt really good in the areas where I was quicker. One place I really noticed was in the whoops. I was able to get up pretty close to him and then he actually went outside and made a little mistake so I was able to get around him. But I felt really good."

DBR: How much of what you had to improve on was you and how much of it was settings on the bike?

RV: "I think it was for sure more me. Yeah, we worked on the bike but I don't care how good you are if you get a start like I got at round one it's going to be hard to come up. And with the speeds we're going and the guys in the back that aren't going that speed it's scary – it's dangerous. So, with a start, it makes it really easy, and then it's just about being consistent from there."

Ryan Dungey's been far from his best in the early part of the season



Millsaps extends his series lead in Oakland although Villopoto is now on a roll

SERIES STANDINGS

450SX

| | | |
|---|----------------|-----------|
| 1 | Davi Millsaps | 85 points |
| 2 | Trey Canard | 78 |
| 3 | Ryan Villopoto | 77 |
| 4 | Ryan Dungey | 68 |
| 5 | Chad Reed | 65 |

250SX WEST

| | | |
|---|----------------|----|
| 1 | Ken Roczen | 91 |
| 2 | Cole Seely | 80 |
| 3 | Eli Tomac | 76 |
| 4 | Zach Osborne | 58 |
| 5 | Jason Anderson | 52 |



OAKLAND RAIDERS!

RV WINS HIS SECOND MAIN ON THE BOUNCE AS MILLSAPS MANAGES TO EXTEND HIS SERIES LEAD...

Although Ryan Villopoto doesn't get a great jump out of the gate in the main event his smart gate choice makes it so he stays tight on the inside of the first turn and grabs the holeshot anyway. As he battles it out to hold on to the top spot through the first set of whoops after the start, racers tangle behind him and a slew of championship contenders go down in a heap in the second turn including Trey Canard, Chad Reed, James Stewart and round-two winner Justin Barcia.

Villopoto dominates all 20 laps and wins his second-consecutive main event while round-one winner and points leader Davi Millsaps battles it out with Justin Brayton for second place securing the position on lap three. By that

point – although still early in the race – Villopoto is long gone out front.

Behind Millsaps Brayton holds the third spot for half the race until he goes down in a turn while battling for the spot with Ryan Dungey. Dungey ends up holding on to the final podium position while Brayton finishes 10th.

Fourth place, amazingly, goes to Canard despite rounding lap one 16th from the turn-two pileup. Trey finishes just in front of Mike Alessi, Andrew Short, Matt Goerke, Broc Tickle, Vince Friese, Brayton, Jimmy Albertson and Chad Reed.

With his second-consecutive win Villopoto closes up to third place in the series standings just eight points behind series leader Millsaps with 13 rounds still left to run.

FIVE MINUTES WITH...

...250 SERIES LEADER KEN ROCZEN!

DBR: You finished second to Eli Tomac three races in a row but you picked it up at Oakland and found some speed to take the win. How did that happen?

KR: "Last week I picked up my intensity a little bit in training. I just went to the race basically like I did every weekend and I was on top of the timing board the whole day and I heard riders saying how difficult the track was and I'm like, 'well, for me it's easy – I'm just pinned'. So I guess that was already a good sign. I had a few mistakes in my heat race but I didn't really worry about anything – I was confident. Tomac just had a bad day and it proved it could all end super-quick. I'm glad it was this way but I totally don't want him to get hurt – we're only halfway so there's still lots of racing to do."

DBR: Talk about what was going on early in that main event when Joey Savatgy almost took you out a bunch of times.

KR: "Dude, he was a total dick! Right after the start you go over the whoops and he stuffed me so bad. There was so much space in that corner and he stuffed me. I was so fired up that if I would have had the chance I would have run him off the track – I'm dead serious – and he'd basically have ruined his own night because making me mad is just going to end up bad for you, you know?"

"Then he almost crashed a couple turns later anyway and almost made me crash, too. He almost went over the bars and then messed that whole section up – then ruined me. Cole Seely flew by and after the race I'm like 'man, it could have been so much easier'."

"I had another big problem a little later, too. They didn't show anything on the TV but before the finish I jumped into the Tuff Blox and I totally did a Nac-Nac and I was running next to the bike over the finish line jump. So I went downhill next to the bike tried to brake and then I just hopped back on the bike and kept going and they didn't even show that on TV. They just said, 'oh, Seely is flying right now!' – they didn't even see what happened!"

DBR: I know you go fast in the sand but does having a sand section help you or hurt you when you're on a supercross track?

KR: "I actually like it. It's a good thing. It does throw you a little off rhythm but it's good for me. I was totally fine with it and I really liked it. That was one of the sand sections that was European sand section – a long right-hander with a lot of sand. It was really loose, got a little rough, and you could actually call it a sand section."

DBR: And just like that you're leading the points. Does that matter to you right now?

KR: "Honestly, I don't worry about it because I know how quick it can turn around so I'm not going to focus on that. I'm definitely keeping my eye on Seely too because he's always there and getting closer so you can't count him out. So I'm just going to focus on my own thing. I'm going to go to the next race, ride my practices, be on top of the board and try to mess with their heads, you know? As soon as the gate drops I have to go wide open otherwise there's no chance of winning a championship. Of course, we might get hurt and then it's over anyway..."

DBR: How do you feel you've adjusted to the faster pace right out of the gate in the AMA compared to the GPs?

KR: "Actually, as soon as I rode the West Coast championship in 2011 then went back to Europe I was good with it. But last year my body was just so down. I broke my arm and then barely had any practice for supercross so went to the East Coast. What killed me was definitely the flying – I got sick for three weeks with the flu. All those things came together where my body was barely at 60 per cent so that's why I couldn't really do anything. And I knew that was the problem. Right now, I feel 100 per cent. We're not travelling very much so I get the rest that I need. That's why I'm glad I'm riding West Coast."



Reed's another rider who's not performing too well in 2013



The racing in the 250SX class has been intense to say the least

LITES BITES!

TOMAC GETS TOTALLED ALLOWING K-ROC TO TAKE CONTROL...

Joey Savatgy yanks the holey as the 250 main gets under way with Ken Roczen and Cole Seely right on his tail. Roczen tries to go around Savatgy in the second turn but Savatgy stuffs him hard. A few turns later, Savatgy almost goes down and veers right – nearly knocking Roczen off the track – which allows Seely to go by both of them and take over the lead.

Roczen takes over second over the next set of jumps then sets out after Seely. It takes him over 10 laps to finally catch and pass Seely but with four laps to go Roczen finally makes

the pass stick then pulls away for his first win of the season.

But the other big news happens behind this battle for the lead when on lap five Eli Tomac goes down incredibly hard in the whoops landing directly on his head. He stays conscious but is too beat up to continue in the race.

Because of the DNF Roczen goes from nine points behind to 11 points ahead in the championship chase while Seely now sits second and Tomac third.

The joy of SX shows on K-Roc's face



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TADDY BLAZUSIAK

THE FIGHTER!

WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH ENDUROXCROSS CHAMP TADDY BLAZUSIAK WILL DO WHATEVER IT TAKES TO COME OUT ON TOP...

Words and photos by Future 7 Media

When a rider gets injured or has troubles with his bike one of two things can happen. They can bitch and moan or accept the situation they find themselves

in and get on with things. Taddy Blazusiak is most certainly a rider that falls into the second category...

The tough as old boots Pole knows all too well what it's like to hit the canvas, and knows that there's no substitute for hard graft. It's Taddy's unrelenting focus and commitment to being the best he can be that has kept him at the top of the US Endurocross series for the past four years.

But the road to his fourth straight Endurocross championship was far from as smooth as the series dominating journey he enjoyed in

2011. Finding himself off the top step of the podium early last year, even failing to make it onto the podium at the high-profile X Games Endurocross event, Taddy went back to the drawing board, regrouped and came out swinging...

DBR: Despite a few setbacks 2012 was another great year for you – what's your take on it?

TB: "It was definitely another successful season. Coming off the 2011 AMA Endurocross season and managing to win every round of the series I was sure that it would be more or less impossible to do again this year. I'm not sure if people were expecting me to do that but I knew it would be hard to do again. The start of the season was tough – I was struggling with my starts and I got beat a few times. But we managed

to turn things around and everything went perfect from that moment onwards. As soon as I figured out my starts I started winning races again. Not getting a medal at X Games was really disappointing for myself and for my sponsors. I didn't perform well and I didn't end up where I know I could."

DBR: You won your fourth consecutive Endurocross championship – is that something you're proud of?

TB: "Absolutely. Winning four in a row and winning one of the titles by winning all of the races is amazing. But it's not the end by a long way. I'm focused on winning a fifth title next year, still really motivated to win races and championships. And also still enjoying what I do. The Endurocross series has grown and grown and I love being a part of it." >>



Considering he grew up on trials bikes Taddy's got a great motocross style

*Intense is the only word
that sums up this shot!*





Toughing it out at Hell's Gate back in 2010



DBR: Did you see any big changes in your competition?

TB: "I know that I'm the guy that they're all trying to beat just because I've been the guy winning the championships. It's always like that. I'd definitely say that some of my rivals got better. Mike Brown and Cody Webb pushed me the hardest. Cody's great on technical tracks and Mike's fast on more open tracks. But the good thing for me is that I can be competitive on any kind of track. I just do my thing."

DBR: Despite your trials background you seem to prefer the more flowing and faster tracks.

What direction do you see track design going?

TB: "I think the guys are just mixing things up and seeing what works best for the spectators. My trials background allows me to deal with

pretty much everything. But I do prefer the more open tracks. Whatever it is I believe it should be about racing over obstacles and not riding over them. As long as there's racing it's all good. I think some of the simple tracks work best."

DBR: Things are tough in the US at the moment regards off-road racing. Endurocross has shown that it's not all about decline and seems to be fighting in the opposite direction. Do you agree?

TB: "Off-road really suffered in the US this year especially on the West Coast but Endurocross is growing and through X Games is going world wide. It's great for the sport. There are some great and passionate people involved and it makes it enjoyable to race."

DBR: After four years in the States you're still

flying in and out each weekend. Is that simply because you have such a good base in Spain?

TB: "I do have a great base in Spain and I'm also able to switch off there. I love the States, racing there and spending time in different parts of the country but to start again and set-up another home is just too much work. I've moved my life around so many times and in Spain I really feel settled. It just a 12-hour flight so it's not too bad. I used to travel for 20 hours at a time when I was competing in trials as a teenager. When I'm flying I can completely switch off – it's not hard work watching movies. I get real time to myself. I like the Spanish lifestyle, I'm from Europe."

DBR: Failing to secure a medal at X Games was a significant disappointment for you. >>

Taddy chasing Tough One glory in 2008



After competing at Sheffield in '09 Taddy can't wait to race indoors in the UK again



profile



Taddy's not scared to try anything - including rounds of the Sprint Enduro series

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Was a large part of that disappointment linked to the fact that since winning at Erzberg the first time it was your first real failure to perform?

TB: "I always think that because I've won so many races I have that cushion, so that if from time to time I don't win it doesn't really matter that much. But not delivering at X Games was bad. If I wasn't up to speed, or had some problems or injuries maybe that would have been easier to accept. But I was the fastest guy on the track and I messed it up. I had a terrible start and then gave it away in the log section. It wasn't my day. Winning so many races means people expect you to keep on winning, which is what I expect from myself. I guess I showed I'm human that I can lose a race."

DBR: Knowing how big X Games is you have to be excited by the fact that Endurocross will feature in four X Game events in 2013?

TB: "Without a doubt. It's huge. Not just for myself and my sponsors but for off-road racing in general. Having X Games go global is big. When I started racing it was all about fun then I became a trials rider. Then I won Erzberg and things changed forever. But knowing that there will be four X Games events in 2013 is just huge. It's a huge new challenge and great new motivation for me. It'll take a few years for the European events to get as big as the one in LA but I'm just so pleased I'm at the top of my game at a time when the sport I'm involved in is a part of X Games."

DBR: Despite the disappointments you experienced at X Games last year in a strange way the non-podium result seemed to do you good. Would you agree that you came back faster and hungrier for success after that?

TB: "Yes, definitely. I was still riding a lot and things weren't exactly going badly around that time. But that really focused what we were doing. I have to give a huge amount of credit to KTM for

coming up with some great solutions and parts. They never blamed anything on me instead we all worked together during the six week break after the X Games. After that things went great."

DBR: You dominated the second half of the US Endurocross season. It seems your summer break couldn't have come at a better time?

TB: "Exactly. And if there hadn't have been the break things would have been harder but I'm sure we still could have done it. But having a good break gave us time to look at lots of things and for me to figure things out. It wasn't one big thing that we changed – just lots of little things."

DBR: You didn't race at Erzberg in 2012 – the race that put you on the map and you've since won five times. Did you miss not being there or were you pleased to have a break from it?

TB: "I don't really know. I had a race on that weekend so I was focused on that. Being at Erzberg would have been cool – to go for a sixth win – but on the other hand I had the goal of winning some place elsewhere. Now I think about it, yeah I did miss it a little. The race has been a big part of my life."

DBR: You also raced your first rally event last year, giving you a taste of life in the fast lane. Looking back on it, did you enjoy it?

TB: "I really did, even if things didn't go quite to plan. It felt completely strange to start with. But I soon realised that on the slower trails my bike just felt like an enduro bike but that changed on the super high-speed parts of the course. That was a little scary at first. I was struggling a lot. I'm used to racing with good tyres and not having to read a road book. The bike is so different but the speed is so different too. It's road racing on dirt. I crashed when it was raining and I was checking my GPS. On the first day I started to find a good feeling with the bike and started to enjoy myself. I was five or six minutes



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Taddy's tough to beat indoors on either side of the Atlantic ocean

behind the leaders at the end of 500 kilometres. What I learned was it's easy to ride a rally bike but also easy to crash one."

DBR: You're one round into this winter's FIM Superenduro series and leading the series. Things aren't great as far as this series goes but do you feel optimistic regards next winter's championship?

TB: "I do. It seems like the promoter has a plan and will build on things this year and from what they're saying next year's series will be five or six events. Having David Knight back in the series for this year is big, and great for the championship. It's disappointing that we only have three races this year. But looking forward things look good, which is what we have to focus on."

I believe indoor racing can be much bigger in Europe."

DBR: Finally as most will know you injured your shoulder before the opening Superenduro race in Poland. You must be pleased to have won but frustrated to have ended the year injured?

TB: "I am. My crash before the race was one of those things that can happen, and I'm just thrilled to have made it through the race – I certainly wasn't expecting to win it. Of course picking up injuries is never good, but the experience of racing in my home country was amazing. I think that played a small part in helping me get through it. It's a disappointing way to end the season but it's been an amazing season."

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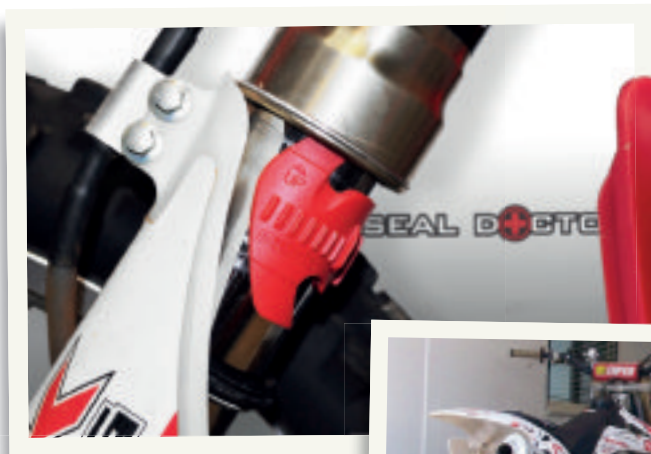
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GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY?

WILL A SWITCH TO SUZUKI SEE MAX ANSTIE
FINALLY FULFIL HIS POTENTIAL OR WILL 2013
JUST BE ANOTHER WASTED EFFORT?

Words by Adam Wheeler Photos by Ray Archer



Where is Max Anstie? In one respect the answer is easy. The 19 year old is sitting in front of me in his modest race truck within the paddock of the Angels Stadium at Anaheim. Figuratively, the question is a little harder to solve. It is clear however

that the Brit seems very much at home on the Rockstar Energy Suzuki Europe RM-Z250 – the third bike with which he will make his third attempt at the FIM Motocross World Championship come March 2.

A child prodigy, Anstie has been split since he turned Pro. Divided between his first love of supercross and then motocross, alternating between a home in Hemet, California – that is the definition of being 'out in the sticks' – and a nomadic existence in Europe that has included brief residences in Holland, Italy and the UK where his grandparents live.

It's fair to say Anstie's life so far on this planet has been mainly about the bike but it is hardly conventional, compared to many of his peers and last season the Grand Prix community could easily see that he was tackling a temperamental set-up, wavering confidence and periods of loneliness. The quick smile was frequently in place but you could easily be forgiven for assuming that – personally and professionally – Anstie was taking a few knocks.

A graceful and skilful motorcycle rider, Anstie has transformed from a gawky teenager in CLS colours in 2011 to a determined young man that has found a nest of fellow workers striving towards a common goal with the works MX2 Suzuki unit. Anstie doesn't come across as relieved but his contentment at having discovered a crew that can focus on him as a potential winner is palpable.

We chat openly about the last two seasons in green and red, episodes like having to post a YouTube clip to dispel rumours of his dad's alleged 'meddling' at the Bulgarian round last April and being one of the few that crossed the qualification heat picket line in Mexico.

It hasn't been a quiet time for Max, and the depth of his inconsistent moments in 2012 mean that he is not the first name that rolls off the tongue when it comes to debating the potential stars for MX2 this year. The repercussions of this assumption cast Anstie firmly into the role of a 'dark horse' and it could be a powerful position from which to do some real – and overdue – damage at the highest level.



The SX series hasn't started too well for the Englishman



DBR: Let's talk about the family house in Hemet. Does it still feel like home?

MA: "Yeah, I love it where we stay. My goal this year is to go into the world championship as late as possible and spend as much time at home as I can. I have everything there that I need to train and work and do the job. We are working hard and that place gives me a chance to get going in the best way possible. We don't have any telephones or anything...so it is isolated but perfect for me and what I need."

DBR: It is a bit of an understatement to say it is 'free from distraction...'

MA: "Haha, well, I like it that way. I train on my own and I ride on my own. We have the tracks and the space."

DBR: Are you a bit confused about who and where you are? I mean with all that transcontinental travel and bases?

MA: "No! My family is here in America. Okay, I'm from England but I live here and I want to be back here racing one day because I will be close to them. I am going to Europe because I am doing a job and I want to be in the World

Championship and I want to do it well. I feel that in the last two years I haven't been able to do it to 100 per cent. Wherever we finish is wherever we finish but if I have a good group of people around me, supporting me and giving me the equipment to do the job as best as we can then that's all I can ask."

DBR: It will be your third year in GPs, people forget how young you are and how much experience you have already...

MA: "It is weird because as soon as I turned 16 I did a year over here – supercross and motocross – rode for KTM then Yamaha, rode for CLS when I was 18, Honda when I was 19 last year and now turning 20 with Suzuki. So you could say I have been around a bit already!"

"I honestly believe now I have found a group of guys with whom I can get the job done. People like Jens and Thomas put a lot of effort into making sure I can be out here and doing the first five supercross rounds. Like me, they see it as perfect preparation for the season-start in March. I am racing here rather than riding around a frozen track in Mantova or in Valence. We are in similar conditions to what we might

find for the first two GPs here and in the race environment it is perfect to learn how we work and communicate and figure stuff out. I need bike time and to get that momentum going."

DBR: Can you understand if some people might think you've 'lost the plot' a little bit with so many changes?

MA: "People can think what they want. I will go with the guys that give me the best chance of doing the job and the Rockstar Energy Suzuki Europe team were the ones that stepped up. Honda had the option to keep me for this year – first rider refusal or whatever you call it – and they chose not to take it. Suzuki came in and we are here now. I am 100 per cent onboard with these guys because what I've learnt with Jens and my mechanic Kevin has been great. Their work ethic is like mine because they want to achieve something."

DBR: Do you think you are a good example of a rider who really needs a positive group around him?

MA: "No, because I think everyone does. What I've learnt is that you cannot take a



Getting stuck in at Anaheim is great prep for the GPs



bike, screw everybody else and just go and race. There is a lot more about racing in the pursuit of winning. At the end of the day you just have to go out there and ride the bike...but the truth is that it's actually a lot harder than that. You need the right people at a high level. You cannot just show-up and race. You need the set-up, the plan and the schedule."

DBR: Are you comfortable in your own skin in Europe now with all the country-hopping and moments when you were pretty much by yourself?

MA: "I've grown up a little bit in the last couple of years and especially last year with living in Italy. I think it has made me stronger. I think you get hardened by pain and there were a lot of days where I just had to scrape myself up from the bottom of the barrel and go again. I feel like I am going in the right direction and I'm going fast at the moment. I'm starting to believe I am gelling with the bike and these five races are for me to learn as much as possible about the Suzuki. Like you said, I've changed bikes so many times that I need the mileage to get to know it."

DBR: Would it good to finally have a quiet, consistent year without things like Youtube videos and defiance of rider strikes? Get out of that firing line?

MA: "I did what I had to. I was there to race in Mexico, so that's what I did. [tongue-in-cheek] People just want to pick on me Adam! I'm a nice guy really! A quiet year? I don't know... I just want to race."

DBR: Here's another thing. Your fans will know the story from your interviews over the last two years but to the general Grand Prix follower you are a bit of an enigma because you'll be pushing for the podium at one race and then down in 18th the next. How do you explain that 'hot and cold' tendency?

MA: "Without Gariboldi and Honda and those guys I wouldn't be in the position I am in now. 2012 was a character-building year. Would I want to change anything if I had the chance? Yes and no, but it is what it is. To the casual fan 'why is he third and then 18th?' Well, they are not me racing a bike..."

DBR: When Tommy won both motos at Matterley

Basin at his home GP did you think 'I'd like some of that'?

MA: "Yeah...but I was afraid to do that finish line jump though! We had problems on Saturday..."

DBR: I mean sampling the feeling of winning in front of home crowd...

MA: "Yeah! For sure... I really enjoyed the Nations actually. Seeing all the British fans there... I actually felt a part of something then. I had a few moments at Lommel where I thought 'okay, we're getting back into this' I was running behind Barcia in the Heat race and Dungey was behind me. I felt okay and it was a good way to finish the season and gave me a bit of confidence in the sense of 'these guys aren't so far away after all'."

DBR: After a turbulent season in 2012 was it nice to feel part of something at the Nations?

MA: "It was nice to ride for my country and to see the British flags. It gives you that extra little buzz. It was a decent way to end a season that hadn't gone to plan. The Italians gave me everything they could and I left on good terms with Giacomo."

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GOLDEN
OPPORTUNITY





DBR: You're on the Suzuki now, a motorcycle that hasn't really figured at the front of an MX2 GP for two years. Is that another challenge?

MA: "I was at the point where I said if I don't have the team that will get behind me 100 per cent to give me what I need then I would have just come back to America and tried to set my own thing up over here or tried to get in somewhere."

"The powerhouse team in Europe is KTM. Tommy brought CLS along but for me that was not an option. You had Yamaha that were going well but Suzuki stepped up and straight after Lommel I went to do three weeks of testing with them and I was pleasantly surprised at the professional set-up they have. I know GRP and Geboers have the MX1 team but it all transfers over and I immediately saw that there was a solid set-up. The facilities and infrastructure they have is exactly what I needed. Jens just wants to work hard and that's all I want too."

"You can say the bike hasn't done this or hasn't done that in the last couple of years but there are stories behind that, and I know I will be able sit on the start line and say that this is the best Suzuki I can possibly have. It will be my bike and it will be the best it can be with the best Suzuki support possible."

DBR: It seems like the team wanted you badly for 2013...

MA: "I can't say whether they did or not but all I can say is what I saw when I went there totally convinced me."

DBR: It seems like there is a real chance in 2013. Herlings is the big target but then you have a large group of riders who will all be going for podiums...

MA: "Yeah, we will be as well prepared as possible and I know racing these American guys, working with Ricky Carmichael and riding with

James Stewart is going to bring a big benefit."

DBR: How do you feel about taking on the 450s in the first two rounds?

MA: "That is going to be weird. I don't know... for me it will feel like it did last year I suppose! I did come back through the pack a lot last season. I don't think it would be realistic to expect a 250 to holeshot all the time and I think it will slow things down a bit. I think there will be a bigger gaggle of people racing instead of it being strung-out. There will be plenty of action."

DBR: What is so good about that yellow bike?

MA: "The first thing that springs to mind is the level of support behind it. We have so many options. We've done 50 tests already and so much work covering the engine set-up and suspension. The wide range of stuff has given me a good view on what the bike is like. The Suzuki feels light and is going fast."



PAUL'S

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INSIDE THE MIND OF PAUL BOLTON - THE WORLD'S #1 PROFESSIONAL PRIVATEER HARD ENDURO RACER...

Interview and photos by **Future 7 Media**

“It's the challenge of finishing and simply doing as well as I can that I like about hard enduro. Some people might think I'm a bit crazy to enjoy such difficult races but I love them. The feeling you get when you finish, knowing that you've ridden everything an organiser has thrown at you, is amazing. And pretty ridiculous too if you think about them.

“Trying to describe exactly what they're like to ride is difficult. The biggest one, Erzberg, is a mad race around a mountain made of rock and metal. Pushing a bike to the top of some of the hills is enough to make you feel like your heart's going to explode – it really is that hard. It's a race that makes you breath harder than you've ever breathed in your life. There are times when you're not just out of breath but you're out of everything. You have to be mentally and physically tough.

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If there's one thing Bolts enjoys it's a nice bit of pain



"Events like the Red Bull Romaniacs are brutal but in a different way. Stretched out over four long days it's anything but a short, sharp, sprint. I guess it's more like the ISDE – but harder. It is long days through unbelievable countryside in a part of the world where the people are extremely welcoming and friendly. It wears you down, day after day.

"I got hooked on hard enduro by chance. The first year I went to Erzberg and Romaniacs it wasn't my idea. I went with a couple of mates and the plan was that they'd help me at Erzberg and then I'd ride in the hobby class with them and help them at Romaniacs. At least that was the plan until I beat Cyril Despres to win the prologue at Romaniacs that year – in '07. It kind of made the organisers aware that I shouldn't really be in the hobby class.

"The prologue was the craziest thing I've ever done. It was a street based course with all manner of man-made wooden obstacles to negotiate. We even rode into an old, disused, building, up four flights of stairs and back out again. There were nails sticking out of the wooden ramps everywhere, it was nuts. Looking back I'm so pleased I didn't crash.

"Racing bikes is my passion but unfortunately it's not my job. It doesn't pay my wage. I work a normal job – road sweeping. I suppose that's about as normal as anyone can get. I'm involved with my family's business. It's not a massive company by any means but we've got five trucks – three good ones and two old-sh-tters that can still get the job done. Whatever needs doing, I do my best to get it done. Whether it's driving them, fixing them when they break or invoicing folk for work that's been done – I turn my hand to everything.

"Though I'm happy with what I've got, there are days I wish that I didn't have to do it. Some days I hate it and I hate saying that. I feel like work allows me to race but it also restricts me, too. I don't get to train very often. I've got a gym membership but I only make it in there about 10 times a year. I mountain bike as much as I can and take the dog for a run. Sometimes I play squash with my mate. But he's like me and struggles for time. When I'm free, he's usually not and vice-versa. And you can't play squash on your own.

"Rarely do I ever ride my bike during the week and quite often I end up going to events feeling 'race rusty'. I think that's the bit that frustrates me the most. Even after juggling all of that I'm still competitive – I'm still good enough to race the guys at the top and I've podium results to prove it. Given the opportunity I believe that I can beat them.

"In an ideal world, I'd love someone to offer

me that chance. I've love KTM or somebody to turn to me and say 'hey, guide these young guys. Ride with them, train with them and teach them to avoid the pitfalls'.

"When I started I did everything wrong at least once. I had no one I could turn to for guidance. I got into bikes because of my Dad but he wasn't a brilliant rider. My mates I rode with were good but they were even better at partying. Winning wasn't always on the agenda for them. When we practiced together they just got on their bikes and rode them as they were. If they saw me changing suspension settings they'd call me a puff and say 'stop tinkering, just ride it'. I think I've been involved in the sport long enough and have lived enough of life's lessons to help the younger riders coming in. I can offer a lot in that respect.

"I think there's coming a change in the difficulty level of the events. For a while most of the organisers lost the run of themselves. The courses were too extreme, even for a trials bike. But now a lot of organisers are listening to the riders. The races ought to be hard but not impossible. The terrain's got to be relative to the bikes we ride. Thankfully the racing element is coming back into hard enduro. Riders are battling for positions and not just fighting to stay in the race. I just hope other events follow suit, because if they continue to set tracks that make even the Pro riders look amateur then they'll kill the sport.

"No one seems to know if some of the bigger hard enduro events will come together to form a Hard Enduro World Championship. I don't think it will happen but I might be wrong. In some respects, I think introducing a world championship would help. It would bring a standard to the event and help to bring in new sponsors. But on the other hand it would kill the charm and uniqueness that is hard enduro. Each race has their own identity that makes them cool. Regulations and bureaucracy could kill that off and nobody wants that. It's what makes events like Erzberg so iconic.

"The beer tent is the focal point of the event for many at Erzberg and the only reason some people go. So many aren't really interested in the main race, they just go to have a good time, ride whatever crazy creation they've built, and get drunk with their mates. That first year I went a big group of Brits had a big tear up, which was a great laugh. There was table sliding, boxing, T-shirt ripping competitions, you name it – it was going on. It was how it should be – everyone having a laugh and enjoying themselves before the serious stuff, the racing, began. I finished seventh that first year which I was really pleased with.

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PAUL'S

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*Erzberg is one of
Paul's favourite races*



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"Although I hoped to repeat my podium result from '08 finishing fourth at Erzberg in '12 was good considering what happened. I'd got a good start and was running about second overall until I crashed. I hit a rock and it just flipped me off a ledge. Somehow I missed everything on the way down and was unhurt but when I clambered back up the banking the throttle was stuck wide open. The crash broke the throttle housing but luckily Dougie Lampkin saw it happen and stopped to help. I got it running again but it stuck on quarter throttle and I still had over half of the race to complete. Trying to ride through Karl's Diner like that was a nightmare. My arms were aching from using the clutch to control the bike. I kept going and managed to finish fourth.

"In 2012 the Red Bull Sea To Sky in Turkey was by far the most enjoyable race I rode and finishing on the podium made it all the more sweeter. However, getting to the podium was a journey in itself. Originally I'd planned to have my bike transported over to Turkey but through one thing and another there was a major cock up and

it never went. But I had bought my plane ticket and paid my entry so I still went on the off chance I could get a borrowed bike to ride. And I did, though it literally turned up about 10 minutes before Saturday's beach race – and it was slightly worse for wear. But I was grateful for it so I cracked on with the job.

"Halfway through the beach race the rear brake pads fell out and the handlebar clamps came a bit loose so I had to back it off. We got things sorted a little better for the main race on Sunday. After a bad start I came through the pack to finish third. Considering what I was riding, it was a brilliant result. I suppose that's the good thing about hard enduro – a lot of it comes down to rider skill and just never giving up.

"But after the highs of Turkey I soon hit a low point at the Roof of Africa. I've done that race before and enjoyed it but this time it went about as horribly bad as it possibly could – I ran over a small child on day two.

"On day one I ended the time trial in 17th

position. I was bloody annoyed about it because I knew I was better than that. So the next day I put my race face on and was hauling – proper shifting. I was pushing hard and after about three hours riding across the mountains I caught up to the leading group. I reached Graham Jarvis, Laurence Mahoney, the Hemingway's and a couple of other guys so I decided to just follow them home. I knew they hadn't the pace to pull away from me so I just tucked in behind them and settled down to ride it home for fourth.

"But as we rode through a village, a little kid just jumped out from behind a bush. It all happened so fast and I just hit her head on. There was no time to react. I ended up cart-wheeling down the track and busted my arm but all I could think of was the little girl I'd just hit. At first I thought I killed her – I seriously thought I'd killed her. I went into panic mode. What do you do in a situation like that? Luckily the event organiser was there and saw it all happen. He calmed me down and sorted out the situation. Fortunately the girl was ok but I >>>



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was so shaken up from it that I rode on to the next fuel check, parked my bike up and went home.

"After a couple of years riding the KTM 300 EXC I've switched to the 250F for 2013. Considering that everyone else is riding a two-stroke it might seem a bold move to make but I think I'll be okay on it. My only worry is keeping it fresh for the entire season – it's the only bike I've got to race and train on. But based on how I rode at The Tough One I'm happy.

"Leading into that race my preparation was pretty pathetic. I had literally only rode the bike once before the race. The Tough One was my second time to ride it and even then I wasn't at my best because I was struggling with winter flu. After working all night to fix a breakdown at work I got to the race a little late but straight away I felt good. I felt really comfortable in the snotty conditions and made up a lot of places on the first lap – working my way into the top three. For the first hour I could see Graham Jarvis just in front of me and for most of the race I matched the pace of both Jarvis and Jonny Walker.

"Unfortunately, towards the end I just ran out of steam. The race just wore me down and with about two laps to go I'd nothing left in the tank. Danny McCanney was still charging and he reeled me in. I'd no answer for him and just had

to let him go.

"Finishing fourth was a disappointing yet rewarding result. Coming into the race I didn't know how I was going to compare to those guys. But with the way I rode it's shown me that I've almost got the measure of them, even if I don't get the free bikes and time to really train like they do. It's given me belief.

"So this year I'm giving it my best shot. I feel like I've got three good years left in me and I want to give it my all. Along with The Tough One, my main objectives are Erzberg, Red Bull Romaniacs and the Red Bull Sea to Sky. Hopefully I'll get the chance to go back to the Roof of Africa but for those three races I want to finish on the podium. That's the target I've set and I'm settling for nothing less..."



Turkish Delight at the Red Bull Sea to Sky



A fourth place at this year's Tough One was not the results Bolts wanted



Paul's performance at the 2007 Romaniacs took many people by surprise





Jobe lays down the Kawasaki beneath
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Words and photos by **JACK BURNICLE**

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Georges Jobe was a motocross maverick. He shunned team-mates, ran autonomous grand prix campaigns even when under a factory umbrella, won world championships as a genuine privateer and always set up his own personal deals. Almost an anti-hero, he divided the loyalties of rivals and fans alike. But as an example of dedication to his sport, he matched every other man on track during his 14 seasons at the top.

From sheepish, moustachioed 1970s teenage prodigy he developed into a growling, grizzled veteran who outfenced and outfoxed his legion of new young challengers in the early nineties. Such a single-minded enigma proved that there were alternative, less trodden routes to sporting stardom and his recent death proved a shock because this wilful, determined independence of

spirit made him seem somehow indestructible...

For five seasons he flourished on the 250GP scene, ostensibly a family-run one-man factory Suzuki team. And when Alec Wright, deeply impressed at witnessing Georges' second place finish with a rear tyre puncture at Hawkstone Park's 1983 British 250GP, signed him for a fresh Team Green assault on 500s, Jobe again sorted out his own 'arrangements' at Kawasaki.

While accomplished riders like Laurence Spence, Rob Andrews and Kurt Nicoll were condemned to wearing ghastly Lazer crash helmets and Clover riding gear, Georges established a lucrative, long-running association with cool Italian clothing firm M Robert. "Georges never spoke to me during 1986," remembers Andrews. "As factory number one he worked out of Belgium with Johan Luytens and did his own thing!"

When he left Kawasaki at the end of 1986

– to be instantly, gleefully nicknamed 'Jobless Georges' by the British contingent – M Robert, with fuel giant Elf, backed Jobe's brilliant 1987 500GP triumph on a private Honda and remained loyal to the Belgian as he battled through relative doldrums before retaking world 500 honours in 1991 and 1992 with additional assistance from elder brother Claude, Italian team Cinti and Mrs Jobe, Georges' sweet, forceful wife Fabienne!

Georges Jobe's funeral at his home town of Retinne was attended by a galaxy of stars old and young. Fellow Honda world champs Andre Malherbe, Eric Geboers and Dave Thorpe were there with two young men who owed so much to Jobe's coaching and inspiration – David Philippaerts and Arnaud Tonus. "And a load of local kids lined up outside revving their bikes up as the coffin was carried out," reported Thorpe. "Georges would have loved it!"



Top: Georges clinching his first 500cc world title in race one at Luxembourg on August 9 1987.

Bottom left: A grimly focussed Georges awaits the start of his second race in the 1987 MX des Nations at a saturated Unadilla, where he walloped American Jeff Ward to win overall 500 honours. "So the world champion is not so bad, eh?" he smiled afterwards!

Bottom right: Jobe (Suzuki, 42) launches downhill alongside Pier Antonio dal Brun (Aprilia) at Lavaur, in France, during his first full GP season in 1979.

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Jobe's Kawasaki debut in front of an adoring Italian audience at the Genoa supercross in December 1983



Jobe leading factory Yamaha rivals Neil Hudson and Dave Watson during the 1981 British 250GP at Hawkstone Park



Victory at his beloved Hawkstone Park in the 1980 British 250GP



Kawasaki boss Alec Wright (top left) signed Jobe after witnessing this brilliant second place with a flat back tyre at Hawkstone Park's 1983 British 250GP



Jobe (4) holeshots and wins the 1986 Belgian 500GP at Namur ahead of Nicoll (5), Geboers (3), Malherbe (2) and Thorpe

Admiring American style icon David Bailey described Jobe as 'smooth and smart' after seeing him for the first time at the 1982 Trophee des Nations in Czecho



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Despite the new three-short-moto format he hated, Georges retained his world title in 1992, sheer bloody-minded consistency beating his younger rivals



Amazing recovery on bent Honda after crash and pit stop at Hawkstone Park rescues rostrum finish in the 1991 British 500GP...



Georges winning the 1983 French 250GP at Chateau du Loire



Georges flings the KX500 back into the arena at Namur en route to a terrific win in 1988

ARENA ROCK!

ARENACROSS IS THE NEW SENSATION
THAT'S SWEEPING THE NATION...

Words and photos by Sully

After years and years of mediocrity British supercross has been given a brand new lease of life with new/old promoters E22 Sports giving everything a good old Gok Wan style makeover and a Changing Rooms lick of paint. It's not just the look that's updated though because there's a whole new name for the whole shebang too and it's a much more apt one n'all (seeing

as all the action goes off in arenas). That's right, the new moniker for indoor motocross in the UK is now Arenacross.

We're halfway through the four-round Monster Energy fuelled series and so far I have to say I'm reet impressed. The tracks have been good, the racing amazing and the FMX shows off the hook. The arenas have looked unreal n'all and in my mind they're presented way better than at any other indoor

race series on the planet – AMA stuff included.

It's like the whole thing's just been made way classier and with a well-oiled *wink* PR machine pushing hard behind the scenes tickets have been selling like hot cakes. So far over 13,000 race fans have crammed their sweet asses in to the sumptuous seats of London's O2 and Belfast's Odyssey arenas and that's a lot of people.

To put that into perspective that's way more



than most GPs and probably way more than the combined attendance of last year's Pro Nationals which is weird when you consider the elements – racing/freestyle/family entertainment – are essentially the same. The other thing to consider is that both events were basically sold out which makes you wonder what the attendance could have been had there been more seats available.

All BS, bells and whistles aside the real

reason I get a rager for indoor racing is the actual racing itself and as my sensually stretched boxers will testify this series has not disappointed. With interest from some quarters of the British elite lacking, E22 were forced to import some talent to spice things up and with some seriously fast Frenchies going up against our homegrown heroes the danger was always there that the Gallic crusaders could dominate. >>

To be fair to E22 head honcho Matt Bates, he said way back that he thought the top Brits could run with – and beat – any imported talent even if ‘they didn’t know it yet’ and he’s been proved right. That said when fat – but oh-so friendly – Frenchie Eric Sorby topped quail at round one I thought the Brits were gonna be in for a right pounding. Fortunately quand la portail baisses le foutaise arrets (when the gate drops the bullsh*t stops)! Who’d a thunk some phrases actually sound better in English?

And in the races it’s the British born – or based at least – riders who’ve been shining with the podium at both rounds totally covered by ‘em! Buildbase Honda’s Adam Chatfield is the current pace-setter and has a 100 per cent record in the main events going 1-1.

Second in points is Putoline Honda’s Nev Bradshaw who’s run 2-3 so far and picked up two bonus points by winning London’s head to head ramfest – he’s currently four points behind Chatfield at the halfway point of the series. With Maxxis Kawasaki’s Jack Brunell a further seven points in arrears it’s looking likely that one of the two Honda stars will be crowned champion although absolutely anything can happen – and probably will – before the championship finale in Liverpool on February 10.



The start gate drops on a Belfast heat race

SERIES STANDINGS

PRO CLASS

| | | |
|---|------------------|----|
| 1 | Adam Chatfield | 40 |
| 2 | Neville Bradshaw | 36 |
| 3 | Jack Brunell | 29 |
| 4 | Carl Nunn | 28 |
| 5 | Tom Church | 26 |
| 6 | Martin Barr | 24 |

65cc

| | | |
|---|------------------|----|
| 1 | Rossi Beard | 40 |
| 2 | Preston Williams | 29 |
| 3 | Ben White | 20 |
| 4 | Conor Mullan | 18 |
| 5 | Ike Carter | 18 |
| 6 | Kurtis Griffiths | 16 |

SW85cc

| | | |
|---|----------------|----|
| 1 | Dylan Woodcock | 40 |
| 2 | Harry Kimber | 36 |
| 3 | Ben Burridge | 31 |
| 4 | Tommy Clarke | 29 |
| 5 | Adam Collings | 26 |
| 6 | Daniel Fisher | 22 |

BW85cc

| | | |
|---|----------------|----|
| 1 | Mitchell Lewis | 38 |
| 2 | Joe Jefferies | 38 |
| 3 | Billy King | 31 |
| 4 | Taylor Hammal | 29 |
| 5 | Joele Hart | 26 |
| 6 | Myles Saunders | 23 |

ROOKIES

| | | |
|---|---------------------|----|
| 1 | James Harrison | 40 |
| 2 | Luke Dean | 34 |
| 3 | George Clarke | 30 |
| 4 | Chris Bayliss | 27 |
| 5 | Ben Putnam | 27 |
| 6 | Gradie Featherstone | 20 |



Sorby's still got it – we think he might be hiding it down his jersey though

HIRED GUN!

A QUICK CHAT WITH IFLY LANES KAWASAKI'S ERIC SORBY...

Although he might not look like an athlete right now there was a time when Eric Sorby was one of the fastest and fittest supercross racers on the planet. And the 33-year-old Frenchman has still got some sick bike skills now which he proved by setting fastest time during qualifying in the O2 and then winning the night's opening heat. Since then he's not had much luck and with two rounds in the record books sits eighth in the points chase between Dubliner Stuey Edmonds and Belfast head-to-head winner Cyrille Coulon.

DBR: How are you finding the Arenacross series so far?

ES: "Honestly I really love to be in the UK you know. The organisers really listen to the riders and the fans are really good to me. The layout of the tracks has been good although we haven't really had much luck with the dirt so far so I can't wait to get to a track with good dirt so I can really show what I can do."

DBR: Are you happy with your race results?

ES: "I've not really had the luck so far although my speed has been good."

Everyone expects to see Sorby winning races because of where I was before but I know why I'm here. Okay, in London I got pole position in qualifying but it's hard racing against kids who train every day to be a champion. I watch TV everyday and come to the races just to have fun!"

DBR: And are you having fun?

ES: "Yes I'm happy! I choose to do the races that for me are the best events in the world – I raced Bercy, then Switzerland and now I'm here in the UK. The tracks are good, the fans are amazing – it's been awesome."



Todd Kellett flies by the London crowd

James Harrison leads the Rookies' points chase



YOUTH ATTACK!

THE YOUTH OF TODAY DEFINITELY AIN'T SCARED TO GO BAR-TO-BAR INDOORS...

One thing that's very clear about the youth racers in this winter's Arenacross championship is just how comfortable they are racing indoors – and I mean racing. There's no just riding around fast anymore – these kids are battling hard and loving every minute.

In the 65 class Rossi Beard remains the boy to beat after the opening two rounds in London and Belfast and takes a handy lead into the second half of the series. The 10-year-old's currently 11 points ahead of Preston Williams who himself has a handy nine point advantage over third place Ben White. However, only three rounds from the four count in the youth classes so all those contenders who missed Belfast – including Ike Carter and Kurtis Griffiths – aren't out of the hunt just yet.

All the SW85cc stars – bar O2 bronze medallist Callum Gasson – made the trip across the Irish Sea for round two although the running order was very similar to the opener. After two rounds Team Green's Dylan Woodcock leads the way on maximum points ahead of two-time runner-up Harry Kimber and Ben Burridge who runs 4-3. With two rounds left and one round to be dropped this series is far from settled.

Mitchell Lewis and Joe Jefferies currently share the lead in the BW85cc

series after trading wins and seconds in the opening two rounds. The consistent Billy King is currently third albeit seven points back from the current pace setters. Interestingly, Albie Wilkie who came through the pack to take third in London missed Belfast but is expected to be back in Birmingham – can he upset the applecart from here on out? I wouldn't bet against it...

Some of the hardest racing has come in the Rookies division as these 15 to 18 year olds aren't scared to bash each other about. Possibly helped by running in the Pro Class n'all James Harrison is currently two for two in this class after taking emphatic wins in London and then Belfast. Behind the iFly Lanes Kawasaki two-stroke avenger Luke Dean is currently best of the rest having run 2-3 so far.

The gap between the leading pair is currently six although Harrison's biggest challenger could possibly end up being Suzuki rider Jay Thomas who unfortunately DNFed round one after setting fastest time in qualifying. Thomas finished second in Northern Ireland and can of course drop that no score if he finishes in Birmingham and Liverpool.

It's still all to play for and the only certainty in any of the youth classes is that the action's gonna come thick and fast...



Dylan Woodcock's on maximum points



THE RINGMASTER!

A QUICK WORD WITH
ARENACROSS BOSS
MATT BATES...

DBR: Do you feel that the series has been successful so far?

MB: "Absolutely! And as much as I always knew we would do the job better than anyone else I'm still overwhelmed with the spectator numbers. Don't get me wrong, to make the series financially stack up we really needed these numbers but all in all I'm pretty convinced that the people that have supported the series by buying a ticket, have had an enjoyable enough experience to want to come back... and that's the only way I can measure success."

DBR: How much of a buzz does it give you to see the fans in an arena going wild for the action you're laying on for them?

MB: "It's a really good question because I always think to myself when the hairs stand up on the back of my neck that I'm the only person feeling it... so I keep that feeling to myself. I can't explain in words how that feels because I tend to keep my positive thoughts to myself but inside I'm feeling really proud at that point! But more importantly all I'm really thinking about is how I can make the show that little bit better every time!"

DBR: Probably the most disappointing thing for me has been the empty start gates – what's it going to take to attract more racers?

MB: "We started the series with too many riders, then literally a few days before the series kicked off I got a few texts from riders saying they can't ride for whatever reason. The biggest reason why the UK based riders have been reluctant to race is because they may get injured before their outdoor season starts and I totally understand that rationale. But now we're up and running and those riders can see the tracks have been safe, riders aren't getting injured and are getting part of a £45k prize purse I don't really think we'll have this issue in 12 months time!"

"I also think that quality is far more important than quantity. We've got guys like Chatfield, Brunell, Lefrancois, Coulon, Bradshaw, Church, Nunn, Sorby and Musquin to name just a few – that's still a very pretty impressive Arenacross line up!"

DBR: From the public's perspective it's a very polished show. What have you been able to learn from other events to make it work so well?

MB: "If I'm being honest I haven't watched anything from motocross, supercross or arenacross but I've spent so much time involved in other events that it's that experience that I've dovetailed in to our events. I've learned more from watching events like ice hockey, theatre productions and music events than anything else although Nitro Circus did give me a few ideas!"

DBR: What is it that makes more people come and watch Arenacross rather than a Maxxis round or Red Bull Pro National?

MB: "I can't speak for the Maxxis series but we've been very successful attracting new people to motocross with the Red Bull Pro Nationals. I do however believe that naturally a night out in a city sitting in a warm arena is a good family or friends night out. Hardcore fans will prefer motocross in a field but the majority of bike fans and the new audience that we've attracted will prefer Arenacross. Take a look at the price of Arenacross too, we start at £10 for children and £19 for adults – that's cheaper than a Maxxis British championship round in Northampton!"

DBR: What have been the highs and lows of the series for you so far?

MB: "There are so many highs – the feeling of the crowd being full and the lights going out at the start of each show, Torronteras crashing in London (I don't think I've ever seen anyone whip a bike like that before) and the moment I get to stand in the Arena on my own at around 10pm on Friday night and admire the work Steve and his team have done in building such a polished event. The lows are without a doubt the worry of it all and the fact that for most of January and February I haven't seen my family!"



Frenchman Cyril Coulon has brought a little je ne sais pas to the series

The SR75 World Team riders run 1-2 for a while in London's O2 Arena



Chris Birch chucks out a Nac flip to a stunned O2 crowd

FREQUENT FLYERS!

THE SICKEST SIDESHOW ON TWO WHEELS...

While for many it's all about the racing much of the pre-event promotion and the show itself features high flying FMX action from some of the sport's greatest athletes. The list of tricksters that have performed at the series so far includes international stars Andre Villa, Edgar Torronteras and Chris Meyer as well as our own homegrown talent Chris Birch, Dan Whitby, Dave Wiggins and a man who's been jump monkeying at these things since 1999 – Jamie Squibb!

"So far it's been real rad but the best is still to come," reckons Bolddog's Dan Whitby. "The more we jump together the more dialled everything becomes and from previous experience I know they go mental in the Midlands and in Liverpool too and that sort of crowd reaction is all we need to push the limits at the last two rounds so I can't wait!"

Angry Geoff is surprisingly unangry of late – weird

WALKER'S WORLD!

BEHIND THE SCENES WITH THE SR75 WORLD TEAM

If there's one thing I've learnt about Geoff Walker in the past nine years or so – aside from that! – is that he'll do absolutely anything to get out of writing some copy. However, his latest harebrained scheme to put off actually doing some work really takes the (Rich Tea) biscuit because apparently Geoff would rather set up his own race team and take on the Arenacross series with two former SX champions than pound out some words for DBR Tested. Tis true!

It all came about when defending FWSX champ Tom Church decided he wanted a little help from Geoff to defend his #1 plate in the revamped and admittedly oh-so different indoor series. After umming and ahing for a wee while our man Walker finally agreed to help TC, then he somehow got Carl Nunn involved and before he knew it had a full on race team rolling out to the opening round of the Arenacross UK series armed with KTM machinery and with a sponsor list longer than his, erm, arm.

To be fully prepared for the O2 season opener the team spent a fair bit of time testing and training down at Wheeldon Off-Road Centre in sunny Devon. And the hard work obviously paid off as although it all came about quite quickly Geoff's actually done an amazing job and the SR75 World Team powered by Molson has been competitive from the off as well as looking corporate as owt – even down to TC and Nunny wearing matching custom painted Shoeni helmets.

We checked in with Geoff – as well as team riders TC and Nunny – in the pits at the team's home round in Belfast (Wakker's a born n' bred Nor'n Ireland native) to get the lowdown on how things are going...

DBR: Have you written your copy for DBR Tested yet?

GW: "Not quite no..."

DBR: Wang! Aside from wanting an excuse not to write your DBR Tested copy what made you set up the Arenacross team?

GW: "Adding more dimensions to the SR75 World Team has always been in the plan. I worked with Tom towards the end of last winter's supercross championship as he was struggling with set up – we got the bike working and he pulled it out of the bag and dominated at the final round to take the championship.

"When TC approached me about working with him for the all new Arenacross championship I had already been thinking about putting something together to add to our other team programs. I personally love the thrill of racing indoors – as you may have read in these here fine pages – so I made the decision and started to work on a team business plan with Martyn Tucker, Jonathan Wilson and Robin Powell of the Molson Group and Hyundai Heavy Machinery. We put a base package together and I worked from there. First job was to sign Tom and then I secured a magazine long-term test bike

and some parts from KTM UK.

"I knew Matt and the E22 crew would make a great series and we could go racing with no pressure and have a lot of fun. Everything fell into place with a lot of communication and planning and the next step became signing a second rider. I spoke to Carl about joining Tom on the team in early December as in my mind this would be my 'dream team'. I have worked with both these guys on and off for a very long time and the fact they have five British supercross titles between them all made sense to me.

"The fact they are both retired from international motocross didn't enter my mind. I just thought it would be great fun to get these two into the races with no major expectations and try to battle the full time pros. Carl took some convincing but he eventually signed two weeks before the series opener and we had our team.

"So basically this part of the team was set up because I had a great feeling about the series, a great bunch of sponsors/friends behind the program and great riders."

DBR: Other than not being able to get your DBR Tested copy in have there been any difficulties to overcome?

GW: "I'm not going to go on about the financial situation because you gotta make the best of things and we have a small budget to go racing. I am very appreciative to each and every one of our financial... >>

QUESTION TIME!

TWO TICKS WITH TOM CHURCH...

DBR: Tom, how did the deal to come race with the SR75 World Team powered by Molson come about?

TC: "I was lining up to do the series anyway and I had a few options but this was the best one for me. Carl came onboard too and it's all worked out real well."

DBR: You had a great first round in London but tonight in Belfast was not so good...

TC: "I didn't have a very good night tonight at all but that's just the way it goes sometimes. I hit a Tuff Block when I was running an easy fourth and I felt like the podium was there for the taking again. I got up and I was right behind Carl and I went down again – I was making stupid mistakes and it was important not to do that tonight. I'll get ready for Birmingham and see how it goes there."

DBR: There's a lot of experience in the team – I think between you you've got a combined age of 64. That must make you the oldest team in the history of the sport...

TC: "I dunno... we can't be far away but Buildbase have got 18 riders or something in their squad and if you add all their ages up I think they might just take it."

DBR: What do you make of the head-to-heads and them counting for championship points?

TC: "The head-to-heads are really good fun – the crowd just love it. It's good fun even though it's not really my thing – I'm a bit old for all that. As for them counting towards the championship it is what it is, innit? I don't get too involved in the politics and they can do what they want – I mean, they can offer double points for drinking after the race if they want. It's got to be a good show for the fans though and whatever they think it takes to make that work I'll just get on with it. It's got to be good for the sport and hopefully more riders will support it in the future."

DBR: Will you be back next winter?

TC: "Umm, god knows. It's been hard this year and we'll see how I feel at the end of it. I'm really happy with where I am pace wise because I thought I'd be a lot rustier but I've been fast so far in the series and I know that – I was running right up there. It's hard with the weather and about the only place you can ride at the moment is Wheeldon Off-Road Centre and we've been down there a lot but even so it's just hard – especially with work and everything. The way I feel right now is that another year will be too much but we'll see. With Geoff being so keen he can hopefully bring in some different riders next year and I can just come and watch and enjoy the show."

He's sexy and he knows it!



TC's got the speed but his luck has sucked

>> partners who we all represent to the highest level possible. I have tried not to draw or ask for too much from our industry and where it isn't possible to have or 'borrow' product I make a purchase.

"As far as any other problems go... there aren't any – just small obstacles to be dealt with along the way. Like I've said many times before we have great team partners and I have a great crew and wingman in Dean at the races to help on the spanners with Tom and Carl."

DBR: How has the series gone for you so far?

GW: "From a team point of view I couldn't be happier with my guys – they are both riding fantastically and as a unit we are all smiling. I have tried to put a professional set up together and I hope everyone watching the show enjoys the efforts of the guys out there on track. We're at the half way point and so far we've out in solid races. There are simply no negatives to the program – the bikes are running great and we are all having a blast."

"From my own personal point of view it's like I am living a dream. To have TC and Nunny riding for SR75 World Team is amazing and the fact they're riding so well and enjoying themselves makes me a very happy human. When they both made the main in London and lined up on the start my vision was realised."

"Let's put things in perspective – Tom and Carl are racing against guys who race Supercross for a living. Those imported guys the organisers are bringing over are some of the top racers on tight indoor stuff on the planet. This is awesome for everyone and the UK level

of indoor racing is being taken to new levels. We are enjoying the challenge and it is great to see Adam 'Wulfman' Chatfield – and the rest of the UK crew – taking the game to the foreign riders."

DBR: Who do you need to thank for getting you here?

GW: "This is a team effort and as such we all thank everyone involved in getting this part of our multi-sport team up and running. Tom and Carl are doing a great job as well as Dean and Paul in the pits. I wanna thank Martyn Tucker for his help with setting things up and everyone at Molson HQ. Without people like Jonathan and Robin – who view our sport on its merits and get involved in supporting the events and riders to promote their business – we wouldn't be able to survive. A big personal thanks to everyone at DBR for helping me to live the dream and to all at E22 Sports for putting on such a great show, series and vehicle for us to promote our sponsors..."

DBR: And they are...

GW: "SR75 World Team powered by Molson race with – Molson Group, JB Promotions, KTM UK, Oakus Ltd, Doodson Motorsport Insurance, Dirt Bike Rider magazine, Hyundai Heavy Industries Europe, Tucker & Co, Mojo Suspension/Fox Racing Shox, Ride55, XXX Demolition, FMF Exhaust Pipes, Dare Decals, The Thick Stuff, Talon Wheels, 100% Goggles, Shoei Helmets, S Jago Designs, Wheeldon Off-Road, JT Racing, Nukeproof Bicycles, Samco Sport, MJ Church Plant, Shift, Gaerne boots, Alpinestars boots, Pirelli, Leatt and Renthal."



PIT STOP!

CATCHING UP WITH CARL NUNN...

DBR: What makes a retired gentleman like yourself decide it's a good idea to come out and race some Arenacross?

CN: "It's all Geoff Walker's fault! He sent me a text message about it and I got that feeling in my stomach right away because I knew it was a cool idea. Because I didn't get back to him that minute he rung me but at that time I wasn't so sure I was ready to commit. Then I started thinking about it – it's indoors and nobody's getting loads of practice at it which makes it pretty much a level playing field. I said let me sleep on it but then I woke up feeling nervous which is how I used to feel back in the day because of all the pressure of racing so I delayed making the call. Then he starts harassing me by text saying 'what's the matter? What's the matter?'. To pressurise me some more he then comes to me with a package that included some budget to get me to the races and that's when it all started looking pretty good."

"The main thing is that I've got no pressure and he told me right from the start that I ain't here to win and if I just do my best then that will be good enough. So far I've exceeded my own expectations and I've been having fun. I ain't making a full comeback or anything like that but I am really enjoying this and I'm already thinking about doing it again next year. We'll see"

DBR: What's it gonna take for you to win one?

CN: "I already feel like I'm not far off. The starts are so important and to be fair although I've been getting okay starts there's only been one that I've been happy with – I've either spun or messed something else up in the rest of them. That's me being self critical I guess but I know that if I got a holeshot I could probably win. It's all about the starts in these and so I need to get a better

qualifying time to ensure I get a better gate pick for the first heat."

DBR: You have really sucked in qualifying...

CN: "Yeah, thanks for pointing that out... Qualifying has been bad but I ain't scared – I ain't worried about it. The main thing is that I don't wanna stress and if I start worrying about my qualifying times then I'm gonna get stressed ain't I? So as long as I go out and I feel the track then I know I'm gonna be alright."

DBR: You've been doing these indoor races in the UK for something like 13 years now – how much better are they now than they were?

CN: "I dunno – it's been a long time since Exeter and those early races. This has to be the best it's ever been though even though the tracks have been gnarly because of the dirt and whatever. But the job that they've done is absolutely brilliant. The O2 was definitely the best one I've ever done and Belfast was a close second because it was a slightly shorter track – that's my only reason for preferring London. I've actually enjoyed the way the tracks have broken up because it's made it more technical and opened up some lines. And it slows the French boys down n'all so it's all good."

DBR: Are you surprised by how competitive the Brits have been against the French guys?

CN: "I am but this is so different for the French guys – I mean we'd go to Bercy and look like travelling marshals. Well I would anyway. They come here and they're always on it right away but then by the end of the night we're right there with them – they're either making mistakes or we're slowly closing the gap to them bit by bit."



JAN 10 13 12

LARRY LINKOGLE

MISSING LINK!

AFTER DISAPPEARING FROM THE FMX SCENE
FOR A FAIR OLD WHILE METAL MULISHA
FOUNDING FATHER LARRY LINKOGLE IS BACK AND
HE'S GOT PLENTY TO GET OFF HIS CHEST...



profile

*Every day is a bad hair day
when you're Larry Linkogle*

Words and photos by **Steve Cox**

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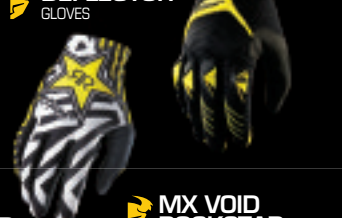
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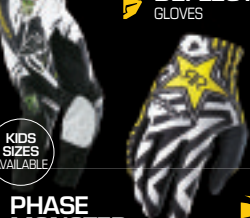
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An original member of the freeride movement Link just loves a nice natural hit



When freestyle motocross was invented it was invented by guys like Larry Linkogle and his friends. They were all racers who started doing freestyle because racing had become too corporate and too restrictive and they just wanted to hit the hills and express themselves on their bikes. This eventually turned into freeriding in the hills while pulling tricks, and before long, there were contests.

Nowadays, the freestyle contests are just as corporate as the races are but there are still guys like Metal Mulisha founder Larry Linkogle who ride because they like riding and not because they are trying to win judged contests. We hooked up with Link to talk about success, family and learning to love riding again...

DBR: For people who don't know – or who think that Brian Deegan founded the Metal Mulisha – tell us all how it really happened...

LL: "The chronological history – and a lot of people don't know this – is that Metal Mulisha was originally created in 1996/'97 and it was me and Nathan Fletcher. It basically started because we got kicked out of the LA Coliseum for doing freestyle motocross in practice and we were

looking like a bunch of dorks. So we got super pissed off and decided that we were going to make a stand against the motocross industry and we were going to call it 'Metal Mulisha'.

"Nathan came up with the name Metal Mulisha. We were like 'f*ck it we're going against the motocross industry – f*ck everyone, f*ck everything'. So we showed up to a Glen Helen/Chaparral autograph signing with just war paint on – Braveheart army paint on the face – and just started writing Metal Mulisha on stuff. We just went full on anti-establishment, against the grain on everything. It was supposed to be propaganda against the motocross industry.

"And then we decided to make stencils. So we made some stencils and started spray-painting a couple t-shirts and towels. As a matter of fact, Nathan just showed me one of the original t-shirts that we first spray-painted – he still has it. Then Nathan was in a point in his career where he had to choose either dirt bikes or surfing and he chose surfing. So he wound up leaving to go to Tahiti and pursued his career. I didn't see him for a long time.

"Deegan wasn't really around a whole lot but Mike Metzger brought him around. So he started showing up through Metzger and riding my

supercross track. One thing led to another and he started basically doing what we were doing – writing Metal Mulisha on everything and hanging out with my group of friends.

"Then he met up with this photographer's dad who was a paralegal or something and Deegan showed up with some LLC Corporation papers to make Metal Mulisha a business. We talked about it, this, that and the other... Deegan was basically the only guy that I thought was pretty much on my level or could talk sh*t and back it up and really not give a f*ck. He was a team player. So we started Mulisha and decided to start selling shirts and keep the anti-establishment feeling going. Just f*ck everyone. It's about bikes and death metal – that's how Metal Mulisha started."

DBR: If I remember correctly you dropped out of the freestyle competition scene because you didn't feel like you were getting the proper respect from judges...

LL: "Well, this is pretty much the thing. I even quit riding for a few years. I was just so fed up. I hated the whole scene – I hated everything. I even hated what Metal Mulisha has turned into. It's just with any judged sport it's never going to be non-biased. I mean, if you're my friend and I'm a judge, I'm going to vote better for you. That's just the laws of man."

DBR: And it's not even intentional, probably. It's just you see things a little bit biased.

LL: "Yeah, exactly. And then when politics weigh in or you have a big corporate sponsor and this is the head guy all that stuff plays into your subconscious. Even if people want to say that they're not biased there's going to be some. It's impossible to be impartial. That's why they say in boxing and MMA they say don't leave it up to the judges. I was just really fed up with everything. I hate what the team has become and everything about it. Freeriding doesn't even really exist anymore. I mean all the freestyle guys want to be racers."

DBR: What do you mean by 'the freestyle guys want to be racers'?

LL: "I mean everyone has to wear their goggles around their neck after their interview and they need their oversized brake discs and they test triple clamps. It's like 'dude, you go straight and you hit a ramp. You don't need oversized rotors. You don't need different triple clamps. You don't need to test suspension'.

"These guys just have to have like factory setups. It's counter-productive to why the whole movement was started. The reason we do freestyle and all that is because we can't afford to have all that gnarly stuff – all the trick factory parts. We don't get that. That's why we're over this. We're just going to go straight and hit a jump because you don't need a trick bike to do that. You could have a bike that's 10 years old and be competitive. Nowadays, everybody wants to be like the factory racer guy. I mean, I wanted to be a factory racer, too, when I was a kid."

>>

Larry and Bobby Lee get busy with the shovels



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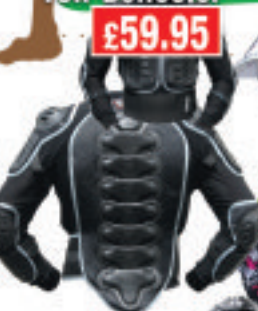
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DBR: The irony is that all of you guys who started the freestyle/freeriding movement in the first place were racers – you were accomplished racers who raced supercross and nationals. Nowadays, a lot of the freestyle guys who want to be racers have never been an accomplished racer – they're ramp babies. That's the funny thing because they want to be racers and they're not actually racers and you guys didn't want to be racers even though you were...

LL: "That's basically the irony of it all. And the way freestyle has become it's like everything is down to a science now. It's basically like a pogo stick or a trampoline. Like all a contest is is moving the trampoline from your backyard into the front yard or into the parking lot at Target. The consistency is always the same. So, hit it this much throttle in second gear. Make sure the ramp's at 72 feet and it has to be 72 feet exactly. Basically that's what freestyle has turned into.

"Don't get me wrong it's all gnarly but that doesn't cater to me. That started making me resent the sport. Not because I couldn't do it but just because that doesn't look fun to me – it's not appealing to jump on a trampoline. That's why I stopped riding the track in the first place, too. I was tired of doing laps. Why the f*ck am I going in a circle on a pre-fabricated ramp that's never going to change?

"It wasn't until recently that I wanted to make a difference and bring my course back to life. Luckily, I'm surrounded by a lot of really gnarly and talented dudes like Robbie Maddison, Twitch, Nate Adams, Josh Hansen. We all live on the same block – and Bobby Lee.

"All those guys really motivated me. I'd see them out riding and having fun and I want to ride and have fun. I started getting back out there and riding and just sucking. Then I fell back into my groove. I like to go on a hill and I like to shovel big jumps – that's what I like to do. So that's what I'm doing and I found a happy medium to where I love the sport again and have no complaints. Me and my Metal Mulisha family are pumped."

DBR: What do you think about Deegan and the direction the Metal Mulisha has gone in?

LL: "Obviously, that was a huge upset for me. First of all, Metal Mulisha was basically my baby. Deegan was my best friend and I trusted that dude with everything. I could have given him \$500,000 and he would hide it under his bed and if anything were to happen to me he'd make sure that my family was taken care of. That's how I felt about the guy.

"When Metal Mulisha started getting big I got the phone call from him saying he didn't want to be part of the group anymore because if Metal Mulisha made a million dollars he didn't see why he had to give half to me. That part never bothered me and I don't care about money because I could live happily like a pig in shit – I don't give a f*ck. The thing about it was that it broke my heart. I even said to him 'all the business stuff aside I thought we were friends'. He said 'friends and business partners are two different things'. That really just hurt me.

"Obviously we're still 50 per cent owners but things were just never the same after that. I want to give back to our team riders and all the guys. So, if there's a budget, me and Brian shouldn't be touching it. And now what's going on with everything, the rider/sponsorship budget should go for the riders. I don't take any money from that. Brian shouldn't. That's for our guys. Not for one another. So, it is what it is.

"I hate having to get riders and stuff involved in it but unfortunately some people like to play side games. I've never played that. I want the best for our team guys. I like solid dudes. Ronnie Faisst for example – he's a solid dude. All those dudes who are in the Mulisha are solid dudes. Through all the turmoil no matter what they've

always remained true friends to me and true friends to Brian too. They never chose any sides, nor should they have to.

"But it balances out Mulisha. I mean, obviously I don't do things right. I make mistakes. He obviously makes mistakes. He can go out and reach a mainstream audience. He can do his deal, that's his part of Mulisha. But me, I'm not selling out. I'm staying core and I'm here for that core deal. Nothing is going to detour me from that. No amount of money or anything. That's just the way it is – keeping Mulisha hardcore. Don't sell out.

"We ride because we love it not because we're going to get a deal from Rockstar or whoever or get on the billboard going to Vegas. We do it because we have fun. That's what Metal Mulisha is. Luckily, I'm blessed to have those friends around me to still keep me motivated and we still have that Metal Mulisha vibe and family."

DBR: So where to from here? What's the future hold for you and the Mulisha? What would you like to see happen?

LL: "I'm still aiming for the same thing and that's world domination with Metal Mulisha. Nothing has changed with that. The only thing that's

different is to have a more positive outlook on everything because of all the tragedy I've put myself through – the drug abuse, life abuse, everything abuse [much of which you can learn about by watching the documentary about Larry called *Mind Of The Demon*].

"It's changed my life to where I don't want to portray that you have to be a stuntman or drug addict or tough guy. Bottom line is that if you're not gnarly you're not for us. If you're not gnarly, you're just not gnarly. I want to promote positive stuff to kids. Doing drugs and going out and being a bully, or fighting – there's nothing gnarly about that. What's gnarly is defying the odds and going against what everyone says.

"Everyone laughed at me and said Metal Mulisha would never be anything. They thought I was an idiot. Gnarly is going out and defying the odds being passionate about something and making a difference – and just being positive. Anyone can be a bully and anyone can do drugs but not everyone can dedicate their lives to something and grasp onto it. It takes a gnarly person to do that. So that's basically where I am with everything in my life."

DBR: The future is just to be gnarly?

LL: "Pretty much..."





BRANDO'S

AFTER A YEAR OUT IN AUSTRALIA BRAD ANDERSON'S BACK IN BLIGHTY AND READY TO GET BACK TO THE BUSINESS OF WINNING BRITISH CHAMPIONSHIPS AGAIN...

Words by Sam Hobson Photos by Nuno Laranjeira

When Brad Anderson announced he was off to Australia at the end of 2011 we all figured he'd be back sooner rather than later – and we were bang on the money. Heck, even before Kevin Stribos had laid claim to Brad's vacated Maxxis MX1 title the north easterner was back in the UK and putting pen to paper for an attack on the 2013 title chase with LPE Kawasaki.

Now one of the elder statesmen of the motocross scene Ando has more than age and one of the toughest line ups in Maxxis series history to contend with this summer. By the time the series starts Brad and his wife Hayley should have taken delivery of their first son and as well as sleepless nights and a mountain of nappy changes Brad will be dealing with a change to Kawasaki machinery after four years with Honda...

DBR: How did the deal with LPE come about?

BA: "Steve James has wanted me to sign with LPE for a couple of years now. I just felt like this was the year to come back and try and win the British championship again. It's been great riding for Steve so far because I know he's passionate about it and hopefully we can do a good job of it!"

DBR: You've been riding Hondas since 2009 – how are you finding the switch to Kawasaki?

BA: "With this weather it's hard to get out riding and testing. We just got my race bike done but with it being so bad out there I don't want to ride it until the conditions are a bit better. It's a big change from Honda. I haven't ridden a Kawasaki since I was on a 60! The engines are totally different so we just have to see how we get on testing."

>>

BACK!





THE OTHER HALF!

A QUICK SIT DOWN WITH MRS ANDERSON...

DBR: When you moved to Australia was the plan to stay there permanently?

HA: "Brad promised me it would be a year maximum but he started talking about maybe staying another year as soon as he got me out there! When I fell pregnant after seven months I think we both decided it was time to come back – more so me though as I was way more homesick than he was."

DBR: So you're happy to be home?

HA: "Yeah absolutely. We're back living near my family and my brother has just had a little baby. Also with Brad being away racing so much I wanted to be home near my mum!"

DBR: How has it been for you fitting into the new team?

HA: "Steve and everybody seems really nice and we're just getting on with everybody. I think everyone in the paddock knows us, they know how Brad works and they know what we're like. We're the kind of people that just speak our minds – maybe a bit too much sometimes but what you see is what you get!"

DBR: Are you looking forward to this season?

HA: "Definitely, I can't wait! Since Brad has been back he's been really pumped and really keen again so it should be good."

DBR: A lot of people have high expectations of Brad – is this something he handles well?

HA: "In the British Championship there's always a lot of pressure from sponsors, family and friends to be winning and it did get to the point where it was a lot of pressure all of the time. But since we've been away for a year and just been the two of us... I think people have missed us maybe. There's not as much pressure and I think people are just glad to have us back. Brad has come back with a much more laidback attitude and I think he's just looking forward to enjoying himself again."

DBR: Before you met Brad were you into motocross at

all or was it all new when you met him?

HA: "I've got three brothers who all raced motocross so I've known Brad since I was about six. My mum and dad have a racetrack so Brad used to come and race there. He says I fancied him but he definitely fancied me although we never dared ask each other out. He reckons I asked him out but it didn't happen that way – he asked me out!"

DBR: How long have you been together now?

HA: "10 years. I could have murdered him and been back out by now!"

DBR: Which part of racing do you enjoy the most?

HA: "The part I enjoy most is when Brad wins. When he comes in and I look at his face and I know that he's so happy at what he's achieved. I'm so proud of what he's achieved. He came from having nothing and doing nothing to being British Champion. He's not had loads of money and he's just been a hard working and down to earth person. That's the thing I'm really proud of."

DBR: Which parts are hardest for you?

HA: "The bad times. Going from winning to having a bad day is difficult. One minute you're on a high and everyone loves you, next minute everyone's slagging you off and treating you like a piece of sh*t. It helps you find out who your true friends are but it makes it hard to trust people. Sometimes people come into your life and just want to be with you because of who he is. You see them come and go in the industry – every year there's someone new but you just know how it is."

"And then there's all the washing – all the f*cking washing! Kit, helmets, goggles, boots. He won't let me touch his goggles though – that's one thing. He tried to teach me how but I just think if I messed them up he'd mess me up so I don't go near them!"

DBR: Your baby boy is expected in March. Brad is hoping to have him on a bike and treat him mean! How are you feeling about that?

HA: "He will be coming straight out of me and on to a

bike! Nah, Brad thinks he's going to be hardcore and strict and the baby's going to do as he's told. I know for a fact that when the baby comes it will just melt his heart though, Brad's a big softie at heart so he will end up wrapped round his little finger! I'm too soft so I'll be no use – we argue when Brad shouts at the dog!"

DBR: What attracted you to Brad in the first place?

HA: "He made me laugh. He still makes me laugh all the time now. Half the time he doesn't know what he's saying, he's hilarious and he doesn't even know he is – that's the best bit!"

DBR: On a motocross bike what's more sexy – speed or style?

HA: "Definitely speed – a bit of rough and ready!"

DBR: After Brad has finished racing do you think you'll stay around the motocross industry?

HA: "Oh yeah for sure. We have both grown up with it and it's in our blood. Whether it's with Brad or our son we will always be around motocross – it's our lives! After the race season for a couple of weekends we go out with our friends and it's great but then after sitting in a pub for a few weekends you just find yourself waiting for the next season to start. It's literally all you know!"

DBR: Have you spoken about what you'll do when Brad has finished racing?

HA: "I think he should do an army style boot camp – he would whip the kids into shape! People have paid Brad to train their kids and they always like it when he's mean and shouts at them so it would be awesome!"

DBR: Are you hoping to make it to any GPs this year?

HA: "Yeah if Brad gets our camper sorted! Rocky [the dog] has a passport so hopefully we can go – all four of us – with the pushchairs strapped to the roof and everything! Just because we're having a baby I don't want that to get in the way of Brad's racing and I don't want our lifestyle to change – we will just have to fit the baby around our lives and racing."



The colours are all different but the intensity is the same



*Despite all the snow and ice
Brad's happy to be back*

DBR: So what you're saying then is that you're still yet to really ride the bike?

BA: "I haven't really ridden it at all. When I got back from Australia in November I was still contracted to Honda and they said I couldn't ride a Kawasaki. I respected that decision so I didn't get a practice bike until January and I've only ridden that a few times."

DBR: Moving on to this season. You could say you're one of the old guys now... do you think you're going to have to up your training to keep up with the younger riders?

BA: "I would say so definitely. I'm getting to the age now where I only have a couple more years left so I have to train harder to stay competitive."

DBR: Do you follow a set routine for your training?

BA: "I've always trained myself in the gym – just done my own thing and followed a set routine. This year I'm mixing it up and I've got a personal trainer and I train with a couple of other guys. The routine that Sharky puts us through is definitely intense. We're working on strength and turning to more cardio soon. The goal is just to be as fit as possible – then it's just down to me and my riding. I feel like the training is helping a lot and it's a big step in the right direction."

DBR: Looking at the racing this year. What do you think peoples' expectations are of you? What expectations do you have for yourself?

BA: "There's always people expecting me to come back and win it but the British Championship is so solid this year – you have Tanel Leok, Barragan and Ramon is an ex world champion y'know? It's definitely going to be hard but if I want to win the British championship again this is the time to do it. It will be really good if I can do it this year and show I am the true champion!"

DBR: Your wife Hayley is expecting your first baby in March – how are you feeling about it all?

BA: "It's really exciting! We have been trying for a while and then we went to Australia and it happened there so that was cool! She didn't want to find out what it is but I did and obviously being a motorbiker I was hoping it was going to be a lad and luckily we are having a little lad!"

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DBR: I take it we will be seeing him at the races soon then?

BA: "Absolutely! As soon as we heard the news Apico said they will sort us out with a little balance bike out for him. He will be straight into the routine coming away with us and everything. It's up to him really about motocross, I don't want to push him into it if he doesn't like it but we're both born and bred with it so hopefully he will be too."

DBR: So do you think you would be a pushy pro dad?

BA: "Yeah well my dad pushed me hard when I was little – I used to get sent home and all that if I didn't do very well. My missus is soft though so I'll have to kick her into touch and sort it out so we're a little rough and tough with the lad – if you're too easy with them then they'll just walk all over you."

DBR: Now you're back in England where are you living right now?

BA: "We're moved back to where Hayley is from in Penrith so she can be closer to her family and it's only about an hour from where I'm from. Hayley's family has a private track there too so I can practice there when the weather is a bit better."

DBR: Your first race of the season at Hawkstone is fast approaching what are your plans before that?

BA: "Plans are to get the race bike dialled in if we can and that will be a good first outing to see if everything is alright with the bike – at least if struggling there then the we will be ready for the first round of the British in March."

DBR: How are you finding fitting into the new team?

BA: "All the riders are alright which is good because there's quite a few of us at the moment. Steve is dedicated and it's a big bonus when the team owner wants to win more than anything else."

>>



Ando's not scared to muck in and help the team out



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BRADVICE!

HOW TO MAKE
IT AS A PRO THE
ANDERSON WAY...

"I think the reason I am where I am today is hard work. When people have it too easy they won't push to 100 per cent – I gave 100 per cent because I didn't want to go back to work! So the advice I would give is always give 100 per cent and stick in. If you put everything into it and train hard you will make it to where you want to be.

"I have to add, I wouldn't be where I am now without my dad. He could have been a property developer and had loads of houses but instead he decided to put his money and effort into me and that helped massively bringing me to where I am. If it wasn't for him I probably wouldn't be into motocross either!"



Brad's back! His front is round the other side...



All action is the best way
to describe Brad's style



DBR: Out of the British riders who do you like to go riding with and get along with the most?

BA: "I get on really well with Neville Bradshaw – he lives pretty far down but when we get chance it's good to get together. When he first came over from South Africa we hooked up on the same team and have always got on really well with each other – I was best man at his wedding too! There are other riders up towards Scotland – Bry Mac and Billy but he's gone to Australia. I just try to hook up with someone who's quick so we can bring each other on."

DBR: Do you think in a few years maybe you will go back to Australia?

BA: "I'd go back for one or two races but I wouldn't go back for a whole season. I'd definitely go back for a race or two just to see how I go on the Kawasaki. I don't have any plans to move back there though."



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MAD MARCH MASHUP!

THIS MONTH WE TAKE A TRAWL THROUGH THE HISTORY BANKS FOR
A SELECTION OF OUR FAVOURITE QUESTION AND ANSWERS...

INTERVIEWS BY JP O'CONNELL

Q: I've noticed a couple of times now that you can be holding down a good position before... going arse over tit! Is this from simply trying too hard, so to speak?

Si Matthews, Norfolk

Billy Mackenzie: "I put it down to lapses in concentration, I know it happens too often but I don't know why. It happens for one of these reasons..."

A: I stop thinking about my lines and think about winning or who is behind me.

B: I'm a bit tired.

C: I'm trying too hard.

D: I try something different.

E: I hit a false neutral (I change gears in stupid places, bad habit).

Q: Zach, when are you going to forgive me for saying you were unfit when you first came to the UK?

Sutty, Morecambe

Zach Osborne: "Well, I do take things like that very personally. But, at the end of the day, it is things like that that give me the motivation to keep working on my fitness and on all aspects of racing. When people think I can't do something, I work to prove them wrong. So, you're forgiven."

Q: How much has your life changed since you were invited to be a DBR columnist?

Sean Lawless, Lancashire

Jake Nicholls: "It's been a total turn around, I feel like a celebrity now and I get annoying texts once a month from a northern bastard. Haha, nah it's all good. I enjoy writing about what I get up to. My English teacher always said 'if you were interested in what we learn about you'd be fine' as I would write nine pages or so if it was about MX but three or four lines if it was about Shakespeare."

Q: Some people refer to me as a Northern Monkey, has this happened to you and if so how do you deal with it?

Colin Barnes, Trent

Brad Anderson: "I'm proud to be a Northern monkey – better than a Southern fairy, eh!"

Q: Having been on the circuit for so long is there a part of you that is now looking forward to being able to hit into doughnuts, barbecued snags, killer steaks and a few tinnies whenever you feel like it?

Noah Drummond, Weymouth

Josh Coppins: "Yeah that will be good! I'll be honest with you though, I pretty much eat what I want these days... but I don't drink in the season or much at all really. In 2009 I had a special diet and I stuck to it, I got my body fat down to seven per cent and looked like a mean lean machine! But I felt sh*t! I got tired and I wasn't happy so this year I'll eat what I want whenever I want but I'm not a pig – I have always eaten decent food."

Q: As a top freestyler can you make as much money as the top MX boys?

James Reilly, Blandford

Robbie Maddison: "Well I'm working on it! Within the industry it's like tradition that the MX riders get paid way more. I mean my kind of deal compared with like Stewart or Reed would be like 10 times different with me being at the lower end of the scale! Personally I'm trying to close that gap – I mean I think I give better exposure than those guys for what I'm doing."

Q: Which would you consider to be the toughest course you've ever competed on?

Christian Adams, Dorset

David Knight: "Definitely the Giles Lalay classic in France. I rode in the last one held back in

2001 – my first extreme enduro and the only real extreme enduro there has ever been. I finished fourth, five minutes from winning after losing 30 minutes when my chain got jammed. My jacket and Camelback were frozen solid. It took me 23 hours to complete and I still have nightmares about parts of the course. It was an unbelievable feeling of achievement when I got to the finish, more so than any other race I've ever done. It was awesome."

Q: How frustrating is it that you go out risking your life, entertaining people, running top 10 in the British Championship on a weekend, then you have to get up and go to work on Monday morning as there's hardly any money to be made?

Luke Kelly, Swanage

Bryan Mackenzie: "To be honest, I don't really care about all that so much. I've raced for all my life not making much money and sacrificing a lot so as much as I'm aware of and respect the dangers of the sport I don't tend to think about them or milk it too much. I just race for my own satisfaction."

"Obviously if I could make some money out of it so I don't have to work I'd love it, but it's not so much the fact that I'd actually be making money but more that I'd have the opportunity to apply myself properly cause at the minute I'm spread pretty thin with a few things I have going on. What does suck though is having a shit weekend, going home with your tail between your legs in the front of the van for six hours, getting home at about two in the morning and having to be at work at 9am because the bloody guy that you're fitting a bathroom for pretty much has you on a tag so that he gets his money's worth!"



GREEN FINGERS!

HOW BEING A BADASS RACER IS JUST LIKE BEING AN ACE GARDENER — KINDA...

WORDS BY ED BRADLEY

Over the past two months we've discovered how to find out where you are in relation to where you want to be and then how to create a clear vision of what you want to have successfully achieved by the end of the 2013 racing season. Now it's time to consider 'what would happen if you did?'

The racing season is just about to kick off and your pre-season training is coming to a close. Are you ready to race or do you have your excuses lined up ready? If you are working towards a clear goal then you can answer this question easily.

At this point in time, with your vision of what you want to have achieved by the end of the season set and with racing fast approaching it's a great idea to have a strategy in place for achieving your goal. By that I mean making the best plan to achieve it – there is no need to win every race if your goal is to finish 10th in the championship!

In your mind, project yourself in to the season and consider where you want to be at certain points so that at the end of your campaign you get to have your bragging rights for what you have achieved and can give yourself a well deserved pat on the back.

Setting your goal is the first step in your 2013 journey and it is all well and good creating a vision as we discussed in the last article, however, many people hold that vision in their hands and consciously hang on to it. It's very hard to grow a flower when you are gripping the seed tight in your hand! With courage, faith and trust in your self, plant the seed in the ground and leave it to grow.

By letting go of the seed you have a much better chance of it developing healthily. There is however a little need for caution at this point! If you plant a seed and leave it – and only think about how

amazing the flower is going to look – the shoots won't even make it out of the ground. Likewise, if you keep digging it up, the seed won't know what it's supposed to do and as a result will end up doing nothing! It is necessary that you take a certain set of actions to grow a strong, healthy flower! It needs planting at the right depth, in the right ground. It needs the right amount of water and nutrients at the right time in its development. It needs protecting from insects and pests. Racing is no different... consciously hanging on to your goal and continuing your racing season without checking the progress of your plan or continuously messing around with your goal is a sure way to give yourself a hard time.

Now the best gardeners, sorry racers, will be aware that from time to time storms come along and damage the development of their growth, sorry I mean goal (consider the 2012 Swedish GP for Cairoli!) however from these points in time, rather than carrying on doing what they originally planned a new strategy is required.

In stormy times you will find that there is a major difference between the front runners and the nearly men and that is, winners will take full responsibility for whatever happens. Even at the very beginning, with setting the goal, the most successful people will take ownership and full responsibility of seeing the achievement of their own goal through... even if it includes a team of people around them. When a rider holds themselves accountable for their actions and those around them they put themselves in a very powerful position.

No one else can do your training for you, no one else can race for you and no one else can get you the results you want. It is down only to you. Of course, racing is a team sport and if you go out to race and

your bike runs out of fuel whose fault is it? If you trace your steps backwards it ends up being your fault, either for not checking or for not asking your helper, mechanic or whoever if the bike is completely ready!

Without taking accountability for your results you are playing with luck. You make your own luck and if you understand the following then you will know how to continuously create good luck. Bad luck is poor preparation – good luck is where preparation meets opportunity!

By covering as many eventualities as possible so that you are totally prepared when given the opportunity you have the ability to respond in a certain way and take advantage of the given situation – being unprepared when opportunities arrive often means you miss the chance to capitalize on the situation. After these opportunities have passed well wishers around you often call it bad luck!

If you find it hard to consider the vulnerability of taking 100 per cent responsibility for achieving your end result think about this. If someone came up to you and said 'well done you've won the world championship here is your trophy and your name is in the FIM handbook as the winner' without you having to lift a finger, would that be okay? Do you think you will feel a sense of achievement, fulfilment and satisfaction? If the answer is 'yes' then the chances are that you need to include more details in to your goal!

Achieving a goal is to go on the journey, discovering yourself and what you are capable of. It is the journey that is more rewarding than getting the goal itself! Work out what you need to do to get your goal, put all the effort in, discover solutions to your problems and then win your trophy. You will be able to brag with gratitude and enjoy a very powerful experience. So the question is 'what would happen if you did?'. |



BEN HEMINGWAY – SIXTH

"I struggled with the faster sections of the course and lost a bit of time. In the rocky sections my pace was good and I could pull some time back. It's disappointing not to finish on the podium like I did in 2012."



ROCKY STARS!

**BATTLE LINES ARE DRAWN AS GRIMBO
TAKES THE HARD ENDURO SEASON OPENER
OVER ARCH NEMESIS JONNY WALKER...**

Words and photos by Future 7 Media



Wayne Braybrook laughs in the face of the Root of all Evil

For better or for worse hard enduro has no official world championship. No points are scored, no titles are awarded and no governing body is involved. Yet despite this, hard enduro has quickly grown to become one of the most popular forms of off-road motorcycle sport.

From the 'below average' hobby rider to the world's best, hard enduro attracts them all. Whether 'in it to win it' or simply chasing the sense of accomplishment there's something about the discipline that's drawing an increasing number of rider in – and in

sizeable quantities, too.

Every year, the 1,800-plus entry list for the Erzbergrodeo in Austria sells out in less than one hour while 1,000 more are placed on the waiting list, hoping a space becomes available. Though Erzberg attracts a staggering amount of riders, all other major hard enduro events throughout the season are equally well attended. Each blessed in meeting their respective entry quota. Further proof that it's a sport very much on the up.

Of the growing number of races on the hard enduro calendar it's the 'Big Seven' that feature prominently. Starting in January and ending in



The Clubmen find the going tough but that's kinda the point



Owain Humphries keeps on keeping on in the UK's #1 hard enduro



ROCK

JONNY WALKER – RUNNER-UP

"The start was pretty full-on – I got pulled and pushed about running up the hill. I fell trying to pass Graham – he went one way and I went another and it didn't work out. My gloves got completely covered in mud so I had to stop for clean ones. I lost touch with him after that."



THE OTHERS!

WHAT WENT DOWN BEHIND GRIMBO AND JONNY...

While Graham Jarvis and Jonny Walker may have been the stars of the show the 2013 Tough One delivered some fantastic racing. With a stellar line up of world-class riders, competition was rife throughout the field.

Up front Jarvis and Walker led the way but during the early part of the race they weren't alone. KTM's Paul Bolton matched the leading duo stride for stride. Feeling comfortable and confident in the greasy, slippery conditions, Bolton looked set to become the spoiler for Jarvis and Walker. But as the race passed the two-hour mark, he began to fade.

Feeling the effects of winter flu, the early race pace took its toll on the KTM rider. Slipping out of contention he fell back into the clutches of the hard charging Danny McCanney. The Gas Gas rider not known for his hard enduro skills was relishing in the treacherous conditions. From outside the top five McCanney reeled in Bolton on the final two laps. Unable to respond to the Manxman, McCanney passed Bolton for third place and grabbed the final step of the podium in the dying moments of the race.

With Bolton dispatched to fourth Spain's Alfredo Gomez (Husaberg) completed the top five. Unable to repeat his podium result from 2012 newly mounted Beta rider Ben Hemingway claimed sixth ahead of Sherco's Fabien Planet. Finishing four minutes behind Planet Wayne Braybrook finished eighth with Husaberg's Xavi Galindo and Gas Gas' Alexz Wigg completing the top 10.

November, the Big Seven takes in The Tough One, Hell's Gate in Italy, Erzberg, Red Bull Romaniacs, Red Bull Sea to Sky in Turkey, the Portuguese Extreme Lagares event and finally the Roof of Africa. They have become the must win races and bring out the biggest names in the business – of which Britain fields the best.

In a similar fashion to France having become the leading nation in the Enduro World Championship, Great Britain sets the benchmark in hard enduro. When it comes to clambering boulders, climbing hills and pushing past the limits of what's widely regarded possible on an enduro bike, the Brits have got it sussed.

In 2012 a British rider won all bar one of the Big Seven. Adding to that Great Britain locked out the podium on numerous occasions. At the Tough One, Erzberg and the Red Bull Sea to Sky the podium was an all-British affair. Thankfully this trend is set to continue and at the 2013

Tough One season opener in Nantmawr Quarry in Shropshire, Britain again claimed another 1-2-3 result. But it's the fight for top honours that's set to get interesting!

In what's become a battle of experience versus youth Husaberg's Graham Jarvis and KTM's Jonny Walker lead the way. Over the past couple of seasons Jarvis has established himself as the most dominant rider in the sport, and rightly so. Clocking up countless victories across the world, the former trials star is now regarded as the King of Hard Enduro. Armed with an unrivalled technical ability, there's little that event organisers can throw at Grimbo to slow him down. Up until now, no one's been capable of holding him back.

During the last 12 months it's 22-year-old Walker that looks most capable of stealing Jarvis' crown. Although not yet a match for his more experienced rival in terms of



Trials ace Alexz Wigg cracks on through the undergrowth



PAUL BOLTON – FOURTH

"I could see a lot of riders struggling, which surprised me, so I decided to push hard from early on. But I think it cost me as I ran out of steam. When Danny came past I just had nothing left and ended up fourth – bit gutted about that."

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Jonny Walker interviews Jack Burnicle about the time he worked as Knave's Art Editor



DANNY MCCANNEY – THIRD

"I'm bloody shocked to finish third – wasn't expecting it at all. Hard enduro is something I do but I always try to do this race to improve my speed for the extreme tests in the Enduro World Championship. I didn't really know whereabouts I was until I closed up to Paul and passed him and get third – awesome."

technical ability, Walker more than makes up for things with his outright speed. Fast, efficient and hungry to win, he's closing in fast on his elder compatriot. With both riders securing official factory support to contest all seven major hard enduro races in 2013, this season is shaping up to be a year-long fight between the duo.

Getting 2013 underway on January 12, The Tough One gave the first true indication of what lies in store. With a record entry for the ninth annual edition of the event all classes were sold out. Spectator attendance was notably high proving that regardless of the cold and frosty winter's morning, the paying punters love the sport.

As the early morning snow blizzards thankfully began to recede, the stage was set for the first battle of the year. Lining up on foot at

the base of the notorious Nantmawr Quarry, Jarvis, Walker and 24 of the world's best hard enduro riders waited for the three-hour long race to begin.

Fully suited and booted, the Pro riders ran the 100-metre hill, dashing to their respective machines. Fastest on his feet was neither Jarvis nor Walker but trials ace Alexz Wigg (Gas Gas). However, Jarvis was next to follow proving that even at 37 years young he's still quick on his feet. The Husaberg rider slotted into third behind Wigg and South African hotshot Wade Young (Husaberg) and with Walker further back in the field, Jarvis immediately charged his way to the front. At the first tricky hill climb he left both Wigg and Young trailing and with a clear track ahead of him set about opening up a comfortable race lead.

Behind him, Walker was pushing hard. Knowing that with Jarvis out front he couldn't afford to rest on his laurels and needed to get into contention fast. Picking off riders at every available opportunity Walker caught sight of Jarvis and slotted into second before the end of the first lap. Unable to break away, Walker began to reel Jarvis in.

Catching up onto his rear wheel the young Cumbrian chased him for the majority of lap two until patience got the better of him. Trying to force a move on his rival he hit the deck and Jarvis escaped. Remounting to find his gloves covered in mud he was forced to pit for a fresh set. Jarvis continued to slip further into the distance. Re-entering the race in third place behind the hard charging Paul Bolton (KTM), Walker again set about trying to make up the >>

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STEVE'S SAY!

A QUICK WORD WITH T1 PROMOTER STEVE IRELAND

"This is the ninth year of The Tough One, but it's probably been the best event we've run. The entry list was world class and the quarry was packed with spectators. For those that came with six people in their car it only cost a tenner to watch some world class racing. That's got to be value for money. Heck, even the snow held off for the main event."

"Beforehand we felt some criticism that maybe the course was too easy, but with the race extended to three hours all the riders were relieved to see the chequered flag. I believe that we'd built a course to test the riders in the right weather conditions."



Fabien Planet steers his steaming Sherco across the Nantmawr quarry floor

The long drive from Spain is worth it for Xavier Galindo



GRAHAM JARVIS – WINNER

"At the first tricky climb I worked my way into the front and took control of the race lead. During the first couple of laps I struggled with arm pump and had to wait for it clear before I could push. After two-hours I felt strong and rode hard to get the win."

ground lost to Graham.

Working the backmarkers to his advantage and improving his line choice, Walker found a way past Bolton and began to take a slice out of Jarvis' lead. But even though he managed to come within sighting distance of the Husaberg rider that was as far as Jarvis would let him get.

Delivering a clinical display of riding, Jarvis was unrelenting in his pace around Nantmawr Quarry. Never stopping, faltering or wavering, he constantly controlled the pace of the race. Answering the charge of Walker, he steadily upped his speed and increased his lead. From thirty seconds to one minute during the first hour, Jarvis bumped it up to two minutes as competitors faced the final hour of torture. While others looked weary, Jarvis still looked as fresh as when he first began. Conditions now at their worse Graham continued to excel. Charging on he forced Walker to settle for second. As the clocked ticked past the three hour mark Jarvis crossed the finish line as the winner and almost eight minutes clear of anybody else.

But for him, victory was a relief. With the level of competition continuing to rise, the challenge of winning becomes all the greater. And at Nantmawr Quarry Graham knew he

needed to set the benchmark high for the season to come.

"I'm really pleased to have taken the win," remarked Jarvis. "There were a lot of world class riders here and with this being the first race of the season it's always difficult to know just how the race will pan out. At about the two-hour mark I felt strong and was able to push on. Getting my third consecutive win at The Tough One has been a great way to start 2013 and it gives me a lot of confidence for the year ahead."

"I didn't get the best of starts but managed to move forward several places quite quickly," confirmed a disappointed Walker. "I pushed hard to try and catch Graham after I fell, and did manage to close the gap at one stage, but he was riding really well. I just wasn't able to get back in contention with him."

With the scoreboard now reading 1-0 to Jarvis Walker has one month to be ready to challenge him again. Now in full swing, the 'unofficial world championship' marches on to round two at Hell's Gate. Jarvis enters it as the defending champion but Walker goes there knowing that as a 2012 rookie he almost beat him too. Now 12 months on can the Kid from Keswick level the scoreboard or is Jarvis just still too tough to beat?

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THRILL

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO THE LIFE OF AERIAL DIRT BIKE ARTIST ANDRE VILLA...

Words by Samuel Hobbington

For a country that's so small and so affected by winter weather it's almost surprising that Norway has produced so many badass freestyle motocross riders over the years. The latest and greatest of that long line of

world class stars is 30 year old Andre Villa who's been whipping up a storm in the UK this month as an integral part of the Arenacross UK tour. We hooked up with the debonair Kawasaki rider to get the low-down on his life as an FMX legend... >>



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Andre Villa

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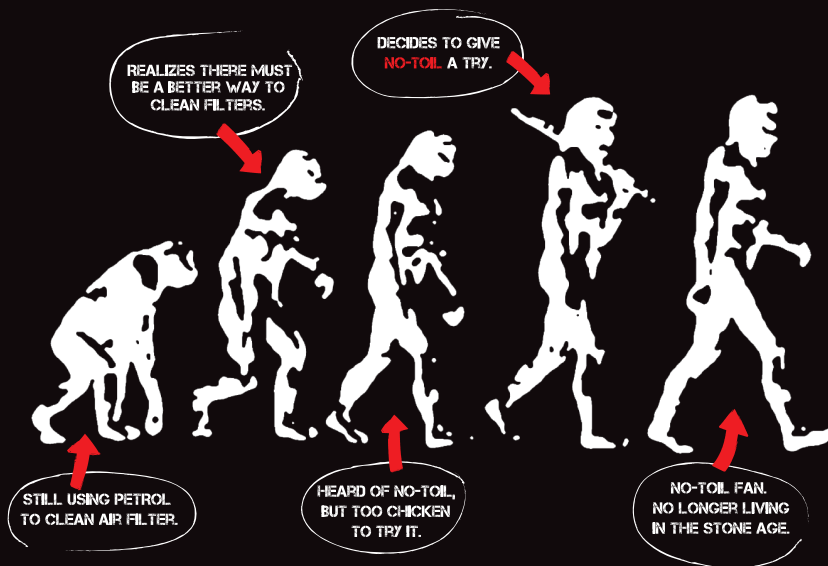
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DBR: So, starting at the beginning, how did you get into riding motorbikes?

AV: "Bikes have always been a part of my life. My dad and uncle were both Norwegian champions and my dad raced professionally in France for a few years. On my fourth birthday he brought me my first bike – a PW50 – and although I can't really remember it that's how I ended up learning to ride a dirt bike. Ever since then it's been my passion!"

DBR: When you were first riding bikes was it

always your plan to ride FMX or did you have other ideas?

AV: "No, when I got into riding there was no FMX. I was skiing a lot – doing tricks and just hanging out with the boys which is pretty much what freestyle is on a dirt bike. The reason I quit racing is because I had an injury to my neck and my head and I was getting migraines so I had to stop for a while. After that I just started play riding and stuff – then I got a ramp!"

DBR: What helped you the most when you were

making the transition from being an amateur rider to making it as a pro?

AV: "I was never scared to work and it takes lots of hard work – nothing comes for free! I think it's important to believe in yourself – I could have been content with being a regional champion but I always had big ambitions."

DBR: After your huge crash in Poland a lot of people thought they would never see you ride at the same level again. How was that for you emotionally?

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AV: "That was a very tough crash and a tough injury to deal with. I broke my femur and pelvis in three places and I was in a wheelchair for six weeks. Since it happened so late in my career I kinda sat there and thought more in perspective. I've had so many big injuries but never felt like I wanted to quit but when stuff like that happens and you are really close to losing your life, suddenly your goals and your ambitions change and age 30 I know that I'm not gonna have so many years left. You get smarter by age and learn how to not hurt yourself."

"If I can get another medal in X Games or X-fighters of course I would love it but you can't sacrifice f*cking up your whole body and being handicapped for the rest of your life for another gold medal. I don't feel like I have to prove anything to anyone – or myself. I still put in the work now, I ride a lot and train and everything else but it's more for the fun now. If I get second, third or fourth it doesn't really matter."

DBR: On a lighter note you've been voted Sexiest Man of the Year by Elle magazine, Cosmopolitan's Man of the Month and Woman magazine's Hunk of the Month in Norway. You're bringing it home for the MX guys but do you have any style secrets for us regular guys?

AV: "[laughing] It's a small country man... I'd say just smile! If you don't feel confident then pretend that you are."

DBR: Thanks for that! So which riders do you enjoy riding with and who do you hang out with most?

AV: "You know what? That guy over there [points to Edgar Torronteras] is fun to ride with but when he rides he's a lazy mother f*cker! When I'm in America I like to ride with Ronnie Faisst, Nate Adams, Twitch, Maddo, Potter is pretty cool to ride with and Levi Sherwood. Torronteras is still my favourite though!"

>>



THRILLA

Andre Villa



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2013 sees Andre rely on four-stroke power for the first time in his lengthy career

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THR

DBR: If you could chuck everything out the window and choose whether you want to be a pro FMX rider or motocross racer what would you choose?

AV: "Ahhh, hard question! When I was young my goal was to be motocross world champion and that was what I was working for back then but I'm happy with what I'm doing. It's a different lifestyle and I think you have a longer career in freestyle motocross. I'm a big motocross fan though and I watch all the racing in America – all the supercross and motocross. I'm a big nerd like that."

DBR: Looking to the future are you doing things now that you will still be doing in 25 years time?

AV: "For sure, I'll still be riding motocross 'til the day I die I think! I'll be that guy, the weekend warrior y'know. Going out and riding with my kids and having fun. Skiing as well – and surfing!"

DBR: So being an FMX rider you must know a

lot about partying...Where's the best place to party?

AV: "I like Brazil! I like Latin American people because they know how to party!"

DBR: Music wise what's your jam?

AV: "I don't like much of the new stuff to be honest. I guess I'm old school. I don't think new music has as much feeling or art in it. I like Iron maiden! I've been a big Iron Maiden fan since I was young. I also like Metallica – so rock mainly. I like some hip-hop stuff too though!"

DBR: What if you're bringing a girl back though?

AV: "Well it depends on the girl! If she dresses all in black leather you wouldn't want to be putting any Barry White on! Whatever though, I'll make the music work!"

DBR: On that bombshell we will let you get back to riding dirt bikes...



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AFTER A SUCCESSFUL SEASON IN THE BIGGIES JORDAN MOXEY'S STEPPING UP TO THE BIG BIKE CLASS...

In a sport where far too often money talks it's always good to hear of a rider who's trying to make it on very little more than raw natural talent and dogged determination. It's like the whole Rocky movie deal. Only on motocross bikes.

Coming out of the same flatlands that have bred the likes of Carl Nunn, Jake Nicholls and Elliott Banks-Browne, 16-year-old Jordan Moxey moves up to the Rookies for 2013 and is aiming get in among the big-budget boys although at the time of going to print he's still not sure what bike he'll be riding. That will depend on what deal his close-knit family can pull together before the start of the season.

Rage caught up with the King's Lynn kid for a little Q n' A action...

Rage: You started last season's Red Bull Elite Youth Cup with a podium at Landrake and came close to signing off with one at Culham but seemed to struggle a little in between – especially in the sand at FatCat and Hawkstone. Talk us through your season and what you feel went right and wrong...

JM: "Yeah, I was happy with how I rode at the first round, getting on the podium and also getting a race win. But coming into FatCat I had no practice and this is how the year panned out as my dad's work commitments played a big part last year taking up a lot of the time we needed

to practice and prepare for races. Unfortunately, the week leading into Hawkstone I had been very unwell which resulted in me getting my worst results this season including a DNF where I had no strength to finish the race."

Rage: After your great start to the season was it disappointing to finish seventh overall?

JM: "Yeah, for sure it was disappointing as I had high expectations for myself last year but it's a new season now and I'm looking forward to this year."

Rage: You're moving up to the Rookie class for 2013 – how do you feel about taking such a big step from an 85cc two-stroke to a 250cc four-stroke?

JM: "Yeah, I can't wait to move up to the Rookie class and I'm really looking forward to racing on the 250F as I have ridden four-strokes before and I get on well with them. Towards the end of the 2012 season I started out-growing the 85 which made the bike more difficult to ride. I believe I'm the right size for a 250F now and I'm really looking forward to hopefully getting one."

Rage: You're one of those kids with heaps of natural talent but without the finances that other youth riders enjoy – how frustrating is this and does it make you more determined to work harder to get the results?

JM: "Thanks for the complement – I try as hard as I can with what we have at the time. It does get very frustrating at times seeing other riders progressing with the backing they have but on the other hand this makes me very determined and helps me train harder."

Rage: What are your expectations for this season?

JM: "For sure we all want to win but to get strong finishes in the first year of Rookies will be fun. I just need to stay strong and injury free."

Rage: How much do you enjoy school and what are your favourite lessons?

JM: "School is not my favourite thing but I understand I have to have something to fall back on. My favourite lessons are PE and drama but I generally like to be there around my friends to have a bit of banter."

Rage: Which rivals do you look up to?

JM: "I don't look up to any rivals really but I do respect everyone on and off the track."

Rage: Which pros do you look up to?

JM: "James Stewart is one of my favourite riders because he is ridiculously fast and does things on the track that other riders can't do. I also like Roczen because of his consistent riding and sick style."

Rage: How far would you like to take your racing?

JM: "I would love to race motocross for a living – it's been my dream to be a world champion since I was little kid."



Rickie's wild style makes him a hit with the ladies



SPOTLIGHT ON... **RICKIE RODERICK #9**

DOB: 02/09/95 HOMETOWN: CARMARTHEN SPONSORS: MOTO PROSS RACING, GOLDEN TYRE, ET JAMES, MOTO PRO SUSPENSION

Watching any round of last year's BSMA GT Cup and you could not possibly fail to have been impressed by Rickie Roderick in the 125s. And it really didn't matter which round you picked because Rickie won every damn race. Yep that's right 17 starts and 17 wins carded. Has it ever been done before, a series whitewash in a national competition? I really don't think it has but if you know different let us know please.

With such an outstanding year in the bag the pick for overall GT Cup winner last term was a bit of no brainer. On the face of it the prize was generous too but preferring to stick with KTM Rickie declined the offer of a 12 month stint on Husqvarna machinery.

So how has the transition from super slick stylish smoker class pilot over to 250F gone? With a string of blistering performances and overall victories around Wilden Lane already carded I fully expected Ricky to say 'no problem' or 'all going to plan mate' but to my surprise and delight he actually said "I'm really not happy with it yet. It doesn't turn like the old 125 and I really want to ride this year in the same style as last."

That's music to my ears in many ways because for my money Ricky is already one of the most entertaining youth 250F runners around. On the day in question the Roderick camp made some minor changes in set up and the Roderick flair hit new highs. When they get it fully dialled in make sure you are watching – it's going to be good.

For this season every national championship has been provisionally earmarked. Can Rickie Roderick run off with silverware for a second year running? Well one thing is for sure, he's

gonna give it the best shot possible. The GT Cup or Masters will be easier than Red Bull Rookies, BYNats or MXY2 that's for sure but Roderick has game to make any podium he chooses.

The RR dirt career started at an early age with him hurtling around on a quad before he was four before moving onto racing Auto and 65s with the Dredgers club in South Wales. As a small wheel competitor at National level he made impressive waves in the 2008 season – well capable of hitting the top six no matter who was in the field. The big wheel years were pretty much wiped out with injury and other family commitments which prevented any racing.

Late in 2010 after twice breaking his collarbone a return to action at the BSMA National at Culham set in motion the second half of a youth career that could well pinnacle this year. "I'm 18 in September so I guess this could be my last year in youth but I'm pretty open minded because there is always the Red Bull Rookies with it's higher upper age limit. I could do next year there too but right now I'm really just concentrating on 2013."

Rage: How's the race calendar looking? Have you got confirmed entries yet?

RR: "GT Cup is obviously a definite goer and I see I'm into Maxxis MXY2 but on the reserve list. As I understand it I can qualify the same as everyone else so hopefully things will turn out well and I get to make the start line."

Rage: It's an obvious question at this time of year but have you set yourself any championship goals?

RR: "I'm looking to hit podiums whichever

competition I race in and for me personally I would love to win the GT Cup again. Having said that I know I will get far more brownie points doing well and hitting podiums in the Red Bull or ACU series."

Rage: Are you still at school, at college or in work?

RR: "I'm currently studying a course called Outdoor Education at college. It's a good course for me because I spend two days a week doing activities like mountain biking, kayaking, river swimming and climbing which all contribute towards my fitness."

Rage: What do you like to do away from motocross to relax?

RR: "To be honest most of my spare time does involve motocross related stuff. I live right by a big forest which I can ride to from my house. It's nice just to go out on the bike and just to do what I want and explore the forest without the pressure that comes with racing. I can easily spend a whole day up there although I have got lost a few times! I also enjoy making mountain bike tracks me and my mates can spend days down there – we even take the pit bikes for a blast."

Rage: What are you looking to polish up on before the nationals kick off in March? And who do you need to thank Rickie?

RR: "I just need to carry on tweaking the new bike – there is lots of room for improvement. I really want to thank all my sponsors but especially my Dad for all the time and effort he puts in – it wouldn't be the same without him."

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NAD'S FAVOURITE...

Tracks: "Mildenhall, Wilden Lane, DMP Lommel and Pontrilas."

Pro rider: "Ken Roczen."

School subject: "PE."

Pastime away from motocross: "Playing my stepdad up!"

STEPPING UP!

YOUTH STAR TOMMY ALBA'S GETTING READY FOR A ROOKIE SEASON IN THE PRO RANKS...

It's just two years since Tommy Alba burst onto the MX scene and it's fair to say the West Country giant has made something of an impression. Last year giving away four stone or more to the likes of Ben Watson and the other flyweight pilots in the 250F division proved one thing – Tommy needs a 450 to haul effectively.

Last year had its highs beginning with a cracking second at Le Touquet where he was beaten by GP star Julien Lieber. A blistering start in the Maxxis MX2 series saw a heat win at Canada Heights and overall victory at Milton Park but after this though the year went downhill fast with viral illness (Epstein Barr) kicking in and then a complicated shoulder injury.

For 2013 Tommy is full time pro on the Dirtbike Xpress HRP Honda team and he's taken on a new fitness trainer – Alan Milway of MX Fitness. The fitness programme has been specifically designed for Tommy's needs with emphasis on improving physical strength and maintaining a high level of cardio fitness.

Tommy will debut the new Dirtbike Xpress machine at the Hawkstone international and the rest of the year will be largely spent in the Red Bull Pro Nationals and Phoenix Tools South West championship series dialling in the MX1 scene. By his own admission the step up to MX1 at just 16 has been a tough one. Although this is his rookie year Tommy is confident. "It's a new team and a new bike – now to get some awesome results and have some fun along the way! Top 10 results are my aim."

SPOTLIGHT ON... NADII JOYNER #46

DOB: 15/12/97 **HOMETOWN:** STOURBRIDGE **SPONSORS:** MILLER PLANT

Looking forward to picking up a Girls National crown at this year's Wroxtton September showdown is Nadii Joyner.

At last year's Wroxtton finals Nadii 46 ran in a well deserved championship second in the biggie 85s behind supercool Lauren Collingwood but Nadii's hoping to grab gold in this year's showdown...

Rage: Have you got the racing plan for 2013 sorted?

NJ: "Yeah it's pretty well sorted. Obviously the Girls National at Wroxtton is the big one to aim for. This is just a one weekend all in effort though and for the rest of the season I will be at as many high profile events as possible – Wulfsport British Masters and the Scott Nationals are the two main shows I'm looking at. Apart from this I will race club events to fill in."

Rage: Beating the boys or girls – which gives you the bigger buzz?

NJ: "I race against the lads every week and it is a buzz to beat as many as I can. The Girls National being just a one weekend high is a real big buzz too. I gotta say both I guess but thinking about it again the Girls National was by far my favourite event of last year."

Rage: With Lauren Collingwood now having to move up have you earmarked any other girls as possible opposition for this year's BW title?

NJ: "I don't really look at the opposition in this way. I'm just trying my hardest, focusing year

long with one single aim – I'm determined to win it and be this year's champion."

Rage: Is there anything you would like to see happen in girls motocross to improve the scene?

NJ: "I'd like to see more all female race meetings happening regularly but still keep the Girls Nationals once a year though as it's a really special something to build up to through the year."

Rage: Have you thought about what you would like to achieve in motocross long-term?

NJ: "Ultimately my dream aim is to continue with motocross all the way on to a world podium – there's no point in aiming low."

Rage: Is your school aware of your sporting success at MX?

NJ: "Yes for sure my school is aware that I do motocross. They are really good about time off and interested how I get on – it's all cool on the school front."

Rage: Thanks for that Nad – do you have a final shout?

NJ: "I'd just like to say big thanks to my step dad Nigel and step brother Emerson Jones – their support and time spent helping me improve has been just ace. Not forgetting mum too because she's a rock. Also thanks to Miller Plant for my sponsorship during the last couple of years – it's been a great help too."



GOT A STORY FOR RAGE?

THEN CONTACT OUR YOUTH EDITOR MIKE GURNEY AT MIKEGURNEY55@YAHOO.CO.UK



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MAX ATTACK!

We catch up with Germany's great hope for MX1 glory and take a trip to the Hawkstone International, the remainder of the Arenacross UK rounds and somewhere else that's slipped my mind. We'll also bring you an exclusive interview with Tommy Searle as he prepares for the floodlit Qatar GP – his first race as a full-time 450 pilot!



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